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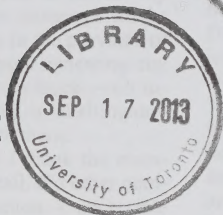
## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)



# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Thursday 12 September 2013

Jeudi 12 septembre 2013

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 12 September 2013

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 12 septembre 2013

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

## CORRECTION OF RECORD

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Speaker, a point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** A point of order from the member from Wellington–Halton Hills.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to correct my record. On Monday, I indicated in a statement in the House that the setbacks for wind farms in the province of Ontario were 500 metres. In fact, upon reviewing my files, I find that there are 550 metres of setback—still insufficient, according to my constituents in Wellington–Halton Hills, and certainly I concur with them.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank the member for correcting his record on the detail. No other comment usually accompanies that correction. I appreciate that, and it is a point of order that a member can correct his or her own record.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS AMENDMENT ACT

(LEAVES TO HELP FAMILIES), 2013

### LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT

LA LOI SUR LES NORMES D'EMPLOI  
(CONGÉS POUR AIDER LES FAMILLES)

Resuming the debate adjourned on September 11, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 21, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 in respect of family caregiver, critically ill child care and crime-related child death or disappearance leaves of absence / *Projet de loi 21, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2000 sur les normes d'emploi en ce qui concerne le congé familial pour les aidants naturels, le congé pour soins à un enfant gravement malade et le congé en cas de décès ou de disparition d'un enfant dans des circonstances criminelles.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 21, the Employment Standards Amendment Act, 2013, which would provide leave of absence in

respect of family caregivers, critically ill child care and crime-related child death or disappearance. We are supportive in principle of family leave for people who have these kinds of situations, but—and this is possibly a measure of the interesting and timely issues that the legislation taps into—my suspicion is that this bill will be strengthened considerably in committee before it comes back for third reading. That's how legislative business ought to be.

We've had some finger-wagging from the Premier this week and some scolding about how the opposition had better fall in line or we'll have to answer to the people of Ontario at the ballot box. The members of Her Majesty's loyal opposition, like all members of this House, are enormously privileged to serve the people of Ontario. The job we have been sent here to do is to thoroughly weigh the legislation that will impact the lives of Ontarians today and far off into the future, to devote serious and sustained attention to the workings of government, and to call attention to the gap between words and deeds, between intention and action.

Here, I would like to formally welcome and congratulate the new members of the Legislature, who will have a very fresh sense of this incredible honour, Speaker. They are probably still adjusting to the gravity of this role and likely have a keen appreciation of the ability to serve that trust, one that allows them to stand in the Legislature and debate bills that will hopefully shape life in this province. That is all part of holding the government to account, and it should come as no surprise to anyone following the debate that government finds all of this to be a major irritation.

Then again, anyone who has followed the history of this government would know that after two terms of majority rule, the government looked on the input and concerns of members on this side of the House as little more than a technicality. It didn't need our votes to pass legislation, so it didn't need to engage in robust debate about matters of policy and legislation.

Again, anyone who follows the history of this government might imagine that events might have worked out differently if government had accepted that debate not only honours the democratic trust of constituents—debate that, by the way, is part of the conversation the government is constantly saying it looks forward to having—but if government is listening, this potentially improves the decision-making process, Speaker. It should also be pointed out that we in the opposition are also prepared to work with government to forge non-partisan alliances—when I brought forward my first private member's bill,



for example, it had sponsors from the Liberals and the NDP—and to support legislation that serves the public interest.

Things are not as combative as some would have you believe. This week alone we've seen that critical debate go hand in hand with legislative support. We don't simply have to choose between a rubber-stamp role and another round of Kool-Aid and Kumbaya. We can and should aspire to be more than that.

As we turn our attention to Bill 21, it is encouraging to see that progress is possible and that the government not only heard our constructive criticism and various concerns about early forms of this legislation, but took those things to heart. They actually listened to our concerns last session, went back to the legislation and made adjustments and improvements to it. Where the previous bill opened up inconsistencies between the late federal labour code and our provincial labour laws, this bill takes steps to work more simply and effectively within the existing legislative framework.

What does Bill 21 propose to do? It proposes several amendments to the Employment Standards Act that would echo similar changes that the federal government has made to the Canada Labour Code. The bill proposes to create family caregiver leave, up to eight unpaid weeks per calendar year, with respect to each family member set out in the legislation. In order for an employee to qualify for the leave, they must be caring for an individual whom physicians have found to have a critical injury or illness and, as such, cannot care for themselves. This leave would come in addition to any entitlement to family medical leave, critically ill child care leave, crime-related child death or disappearance leave and personal emergency leave.

Bill 21 is a compassionate bill, but the fact that we are having this discussion is a symptom of a larger issue: a problem with the way our home care system is set up at this moment. What we're looking at is unpaid leave for a family member to fill in the blanks that exist in a system that is in disrepair.

About 18 months ago, while Bill 30 was being debated, a memorable headline ran in the *Hamilton Spectator*. It read, "It May Be Easier to Get into a Cemetery than a Long-Term Care Bed." The *Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN* had an overall wait time of 178 days for placement in a long-term-care home. That LHIN had the second-longest waits in the province when it came to moving patients from acute care hospital beds to long-term-care beds: 107 days, almost twice the provincial average.

0910

Almost 40% of long-term-care residents in the Hamilton area LHIN reported increasing difficulty performing everyday tasks. It was the highest such rate in the province. That was shameful. That is the reality waiting for caregivers: unpaid leave, mounting expenses and little in the way of medical help or emotional support on the horizon.

As safety nets go, it's not hard to imagine better coverage. A sizable portion of the Canadian workforce is

living paycheque to paycheque. They cannot afford to miss a single week, let alone eight weeks. However compassionate the gesture contained in legislation like this, in the bigger picture, it seems rather thin. It begs the legitimate question: Are we really doing our best to address the issues in a sustainable and holistic way, or are we falling into the policy habit of band-aid solutions, and ineffective ones at that?

Just two days ago Statistics Canada's Caregivers in Canada study revealed that last year about 8.1 million individuals—28% of Canadians age 15 and up, Speaker—provided care to a family member or friend with a long-term health condition, disability or age-related needs. Most often, these duties fell to those aged 45 to 64, and over a quarter of caregivers could be described as the sandwich generation, caring for elderly parents as well as looking after their own child's welfare and education. On top of being stretched thin, only one in five caregivers receive financial support. None of us can miss the trends that come along with an aging population. The government understands this well enough.

Various members opposite have, at one point or another, talked about the dignity of aging in place, of the importance of staying at home, and nobody with a heart beating could fault those goals. If it's not obvious, let me say it for the record. Those are noble and worthwhile goals, ones that demand to be taken seriously. I'll always say, as many before me have, that I wholeheartedly support the spirit that brought this legislation forward. I support this government's intent to address this need, to close a gap that exists in our communities and to help the people of this great province. There is no question, Speaker, that resolving that issue will do a lot of good. It is a positive step, no doubt. I'm happy to support and move it to committee where we can hopefully address the concerns that have been brought forward by all of us.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** It's a pleasure to rise on the family caregiver leave act, an act that we spoke at length about before the session adjourned for the summer, one that I think had broad consensus throughout the Legislature, one that I think has some glaring gaps in terms of its support—financial support specifically—for family members who do require a leave when another family member has been either diagnosed or is critically ill. It's one that I think members have heard from their constituents throughout many facets, one that many of us maybe have experienced on a personal level. We all understand the important need to have that support mechanism in place for a family member.

In fact, I can tell you right now that my mother, who is not working any longer—she's retired—has left the province to go and help her sister, my Aunt Patti. I'll give a shout-out to my Aunt Patti. Love you, Aunt Patti, and miss you. Mom, can't wait until you get home, and wish you well.

My Aunt Patti is going through treatment for cancer, and it's our family that has surrounded my Aunt Patti to



offer her and her family any assistance that's required. If my mother had been working right now, that's a scenario where the family caregiver leave act would come into play.

Now, could my mum afford to take that time off in an unpaid scenario? I don't know. Thankfully, my mum and dad both had good-paying, unionized jobs that offered them support and benefits, but others in this province aren't as fortunate. I wonder if the government actually understands that. Although this may be a step in the right direction, it certainly doesn't go far enough to provide that assurance and real critical assistance that people need when helping out a family member.

So I applaud the government. We're going to vote for this bill. I'm going to support this bill, but I'm going to continue to push for some measure of financial assistance for family members who do take part in this program.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments? The Attorney General.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Thank you very much, Speaker. I listened with great interest to the member from Burlington on this issue. It sounds to me that they're totally in favour. She even wanted the whole process to be speeded along so that the bill could go to committee. My suggestion is that we do that right away. We've had so many hours of debate on this. We all think it's a great idea. There may be some minor issues that that will have to be worked out. There are many other issues that we could be talking about in this House; I think we all agree on that. So why don't we just move it along? Why don't we not put up any more speakers on all sides, get the bill passed, get it to committee and have it reported from the committee back to the House so that it can be implemented as soon as possible, so that all the good things that we've said about the bill and all the good ways in which we can help the people of Ontario to get the kind of support that's required in situations where family members do need the assistance of other family members under this particular act—so that that can happen as soon as possible?

I would hope that after this member has spoken, no other member will get up. We've had many, many hours of debate on it. Let's get it to committee. Let's get it going and stop playing games on all sides—on all sides. I'm not going to point any fingers at the other two parties. We all know that there are games being played here that have nothing to do with the basic substance of this bill, which is good for the people of Ontario, particularly for those people who need help and assistance from family members in time of need. Let's get on with it.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** First of all, let's pay tribute where it's deserved. The member from Burlington, I think, gave a very fine speech and a very clear interpretation of the advantages of the bill. It's clear that we support the bill.

I'm a bit disappointed by the minister, the Attorney General for Ontario, who should know better, really. He's really throwing a bit of a slam against the rights and

responsibilities of members to stand for their constituents and give voice to the concerns that they've heard. I make this a real comment because the member from Essex is a perfect and recent example, when he stood up and talked about his Aunt Patti, and his mother taking time off out of her own personal life to take care of her sister, I gather. So let's not trivialize this.

I think he also went on to make a very good point, as did the member from Burlington. This bill is really—it's been said several times—a feel-good bill, but if you take the cover off the book and start looking at the detail, the story itself, there's not five cents of money in it. For those families who are suffering from cancer or a child who may have been abducted or who knows what the purpose, to take time off work could possibly be a barrier for them. They may lose their job. I have a woman now who is complaining to me that she's got to take time off for jury duty, and she's living from hand to mouth and can't do jury duty because she doesn't get her paycheque.

So if you want to look at the bill, we support it. I think it should go to committee. There's only been nine hours and 20 minutes of debate, and there are over 100 members in this House, most of whom want to speak, especially on our side. Tim Hudak, our leader, has encouraged us all to participate strongly, affirming our position on bills. In this case we're affirming the support for the bill, and the member from Burlington did that very well, I thought.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** It's a wonderful privilege to stand and debate this bill once again. As the member from across the way mentioned, we have to give this bill due process, like any other bill.

0920

Let's set the record straight: The only reason we started discussing this yesterday is because of the extensive work that the member from Nickel Belt had done on the tanning beds, and the discussion that happened here in this House yesterday. It freed up the opportunity and certain slots yesterday afternoon to have these discussions here today. This was nowhere on the radar or on the paper from this government. So let's get that out of the way right now, and let's talk about that for a bit.

The member from Durham had mentioned that this is a feel-good bill, and it is a feel-good bill. If you look at it, in essence what it was before and what it has come to is the family caregiver—and we've added a couple of media clips there where we have critically ill child care and crime-related child death and disappearance leave of absence. But essentially the bill has the same meat that's within it, which was no meat. It's a good announcement, which unfortunately, this Liberal government is known to do. It has little impact to assist anybody.

Some will benefit from it, but the individuals who are going to benefit from it are going to be minimal, because there was a lot of information, a lot of discussions that were held in this House yesterday in regard to how many



individuals across this province are impacted by the loss of one pay, never mind a couple of pays in a given month.

I'm looking forward to this going to committee, and hopefully we can get some meat on the bones of this bill, because it's very lacking right now.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Burlington, you have two minutes for a response.

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** Thank you, Speaker. We have all seen friends and colleagues who have faced immense personal challenges, undergone intense medical treatments or endured family tragedy. We all know the aches of having to be somewhere far from the side of a loved one in need. Bill 21 aims to address that, but it goes further than eight weeks of caregiver help. It would also provide unpaid job-protected leave for parents caring for a critically ill child, parents of a missing child and parents of a child who has died and where the disappearance or death is probably the result of a terrible crime.

Here again, Bill 21 dovetails with federal legislation. As of New Year's Day 2013, the federal government began providing grants lasting 35 weeks for what is basically the equivalent of this bill's proposed crime-related child death or disappearance leave. In June, the federal government began paying out benefits for the federal equivalent of the proposed critically ill child care leave. This is just another example of how constructive criticism and due consideration can improve the quality of the provincial government's bills. Bill 21 improves on Bill 30. It can still be improved again.

Hopefully we can move this legislation forward and strengthen it in committee. At the same time, hopefully the government will give serious consideration to addressing shortcomings in the wider system that caregivers rely on.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélina:** I too would like to add a few words about the caregiver act. This is a bill that had been first introduced—it got reintroduced with some changes. The changes basically had to do with children and had to do with a critically ill child as well as children disappearing, which are situations that, I guess, don't happen very often, but when it does happen, I can see why the parents would need to leave work.

In real life, when a child falls sick, when a child is picked up by an ambulance and rushed to Sick Kids or any other children's hospital and the parents get that phone call that your child is now in the hospital, it doesn't matter. I don't know one employer who will say, "No, you have to finish your shift. You cannot go to the bedside of your child who is now critically sick"—as we say they have to be.

I can tell you of numerous examples where children were brought into the hospital. It didn't matter if their dad was at the bottom of Creighton Mine, which is more than one mile down under the ground; they would go and

get them. They would bring them up, and they would be with their child. To think that there are employers out there who would tell you, "No, you've got to finish your shift," is to really think very little of Ontarians, isn't it? Employers are human beings. Employers have children, too, and most of them recognize this.

To me, this bill will help very, very few people. Everything that has been said about the burden on caregivers, all of this is true. Everything that has been said about the aging population and people putting their shoulder to the wheel to make sure that they continue to live in our communities, they continue to be welcome in our families, in our communities—that great work happens because we have caregivers. It happens because we have men and women and daughters and brothers-in-law and everybody else who are happy to make sure that a frail elderly person or a sick child or a disabled adult is part of our community. This is what we do as Ontarians: We help each other out.

When that help demands a little bit too many hours, the number one reason why people cannot step up to the plate and continue to help their loved ones, their neighbours, their friends, is money. It doesn't have to do with the Employment Standards Act, which is what we're about to change. It has to do with money. It has to do with the fact that, if you have to take a week off without pay, you don't get paid. And although we say that medicare is free—yes, hospital services and physician services are free, but everything else around medicare costs a lot of money.

If you are maintaining somebody who is frail or fragile or disabled or needs a caregiver, believe you me, Speaker, you have a list of expenses from my seat to yours, because drugs are not covered, bedding supplies are not covered, any kind of instruments that you need in the home are not covered, and all of this needs to come out of your pocket. And now we're saying that you're going to have to stay home without pay. Who can afford to do that?

So here we have a bill that has a pretty cool name. I like the name. It talks about an issue that is important; absolutely. Caregivers are very important, and we have to do more to support them. We have to do more to show our true colours, that we are a caring community, that we want people with needs, with disabilities, who are frail, to live in our communities, to be fully engaged, to participate, to allow us to share in their lives, to learn from them. We want all of this, but to have all of this sometimes needs a bit of cash, and this is where we're short. We fall flat.

All that the bill is talking about is making sure that you can take a week off. Unfortunately, that is seldom the issue. If something big is coming that has to do with a serious medical illness, employers will realize that. If you have been looking after your mom or your mother-in-law or your aunt or your neighbours or your friends, your employer will know that. And if that person needs extra help, your employer will know that also, and chances are they will give you the time off. But the problem is, will you be able to afford to take the time off?

When the bill was first introduced, I had an issue with “serious medical,” because a serious illness has a definition within the medical world that does not include frailty, that does not include aging. Aging is not a disease, Mr. Speaker. Aging is a normal progression of life. But as we age, people get frail and they may be in need of caregivers but have no sickness whatsoever. They’re just old.

0930

Age is not a disease. I know a perfectly healthy 92-year-old—happens to be my father-in-law—who has no disease whatsoever. Is he frail? Well, he’s 92 years old. I’m proud to say that he still has a driver’s licence, drives his car, does his business, handles his own affairs. But every now and again, does he need help? Yes, absolutely. Absolutely. Not because he’s sick; just because he is aged. He has had a good life, and I hope he still has many, many years. I’m betting right now that he makes it to 100, just to have it on the record. Eight years from now we’ll check if I’m right, but I’m going to buy my card right now, and I bet he makes it to 100.

The fact is that as he gets older, he gets frailer, which means that he may need a little bit of help, but he would not qualify for that because he’s not seriously ill. He’s just older. He doesn’t see as well. He doesn’t hear as well. He doesn’t move as well. He doesn’t walk as well. None of these are diseases and certainly none of these are serious diseases, but that doesn’t mean that he doesn’t need a little bit of caregiving every now and again. I’m more than willing to do this and everybody else in my family is more than willing to do this, and we will continue to do that. But that caregiver leave does not apply because he’s not seriously ill; he’s frail.

Yes, I want it to be on the record, not because I want to stall the bill, but because if we’re going to be doing this tiny step of saying that we will change the labour act so that if you go and help somebody for a week you won’t lose your job, then let’s make sure that we capture as many people as possible in there. Let’s make sure that we have a definition that is inclusive of frailty and that is inclusive of aging, which cannot be defined in the way it is defined now.

I cannot let this opportunity go by without talking about our seriously lacking home care, because with caregivers, there’s always a flipside to home care. I’d like to talk about—I’ll call him Mr. Goudreau from my riding. He’s 81 years old and looking after his wife that is seriously disabled, but this man will keep her at home until his last breath. All he wants is a little bit of help. You figure he could get this through home care. My God—all he wants is to be able to sleep at night. Send him someone so that he can sleep at night, and he will continue to look after his very disabled wife for the rest of his or her life. We can’t even do this. Three nights a week, he gets somebody from midnight to 6 o’clock in the morning; the rest of the nights he’s up. An 81-year-old who can’t sleep has a hard time being a caregiver.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** It’s a pleasure for me to rise and speak at second reading to Bill 21. I listened with interest to the member from Nickel Belt and her very eloquent comments with respect to what she sees taking place in this legislation. I also heard the member from Burlington speak a bit earlier.

As the Attorney General said just a few minutes ago, I think that’s why it’s of extreme importance that we get this bill to committee as quickly as possible so that it can go through the further study and examination that it needs and it can come back here for third reading, because it is the right thing to do.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I’m pleased to add a few comments on Bill 21. I think the whole premise of providing caregiver leave is based on some of the realities that families face today. In times past, people lived very often in the communities in which they were raised. They were there and they had a much closer network of family and extended family, and so people could be expected then to be able to provide a bit more opportunity to support those in their community, whether they were neighbours, friends or family. Today, it’s a very different story. Today, we’re looking at communities that are the seven to seven, where people leave at 7 a.m., get home at 7 p.m., and can barely look after the people and the children in their own household.

But the problem with the bill is that it’s now turning the burden essentially to employers, and they’re left to find accommodation for the absence of an individual. While they may be able to do this, in some businesses this becomes a burden, and they then have to carry the burden.

The issue at hand is really the question of the strength of our safety net in our communities, and the importance, then, of looking at increasing the supports for providing those safety nets. Everyone has examples in their own ridings of people who need that additional help.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** As you know, I just went through a summer-long by-election campaign, and, going door to door, one of the things that I encountered more than anything else was the state of health care in our province. I find that health care is held together by so many threads. It can be long-term care. It can be caregiving. It can be the need for better services, shorter wait times. But it’s all held together by threads.

I know when I was on city council for seven years, a member from the other side of town—not a member, a citizen—would come and sit in the audience, because he was always out there raising money for the Ronald McDonald House. We have one in London; we don’t have one in Windsor yet. He wanted councillors to be mindful of the fact that one of the threads in health care that he thought was needed was a Ronald McDonald House, so people needing time away to go up and look after a loved one or a child out of town would have that caregiving capability.



I don't know how many times in my community you read in the paper about a pasta fundraiser to raise money for a family that needs some kind of financial support because they have a child who has been injured or become ill and is being looked after out of town. But that's one of the threads that ties health care together in our province.

Care in the home: We want to keep our seniors in the home as long as we can. We don't want them to overburden the health care system and long-term care. We have enough people who should be in a long-term-care home now tying up a hospital bed.

So we need these threads. We need to look at all of these together, and I think it's one of these golden threads, the caregiver bill, and I really look forward to it going to committee.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to rise to speak in support of Bill 21. My colleague from Vaughan and others have spoken eloquently on this Bill 21 for well over 9.5 hours. I think it's appropriate for this bill to go to committee. I think that's the right thing to do. That's my remark today.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Nickel Belt, you have two minutes for a response.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. I certainly want to congratulate my brand new colleague from Windsor-Tecumseh for his comments. It's quite nerve-racking to be a new member in this House, so I wanted to congratulate him for his taking part in this debate.

One other part of the bill that is problematic for me is the time frame of one week. That was there in the previous rendition of the bill; it is there in this rendition of the bill—where you have to take a week at a time. Well, for a lot of people, the number one reason they have to miss work is a doctor's appointment. They want to take a loved one to a doctor's appointment. Often an elderly person, a person who would qualify for the definition of a seriously ill person, is at home with a serious, chronic illness, but the bill does not allow that.

0940

To know that you don't have to be asking for a favour or any of this, that if you ask for a day off to take anybody—your mother-in-law or your spouse or a child—to the doctor and that you're protected by law, to me, would have a real value, because this happens often. Now, what ends up happening is that you will ask your employer, who can say yes or no, and you feel like you're asking for a favour. Having it in the act, to me, would be a real step forward: If you want to take an elderly, seriously ill person or any aged, seriously ill person to the doctor, you know that you are protected by this act, that if you ask for the day off, you will get it. That would be a step forward.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** This is the first opportunity I've had to welcome the five newly elected members to the

House. I wish them all the best. I look forward to working with you in the future, in the coming days.

It is a pleasure to rise in the House to speak to this act, the Employment Standards Amendment Act (Leaves to Help Families). It's a privilege to speak to a bill that touches upon some of the most difficult experiences any person or family might be faced with. We all agree that some of the most traumatic experiences someone can experience are their loved one becoming critically ill or losing a child. Because these issues are ones that everyone can or will relate to at one point in their lives or another—and it's also something we don't want to face. It's something none of us hope we ever have to face. But we, as a society, have addressed it before in the existing Employment Standards Act, 2000, and we should continue to ensure that families can make it through these most trying times. I understand the Liberals would like to extend the scope of the act by striking out "organ donor leave, personal emergency leave" and substituting "organ donor leave, family caregiver legal, critically ill child care leave, crime-related child death or disappearance leave, personal emergency leave."

Like the rest of our caucus here on this side, I'm supportive of the people and the families in these challenging situations, and that's why I'll support this bill. However, this legislation has some fundamental shortcomings, and I'm proud to stand here representing Barrie and to have this opportunity to speak to this bill. I think any indication from the government side that this is a waste of time and somehow something that doesn't need to be done and needs to be rushed through is inappropriate.

The shortcomings of this bill, which I think will be very important to sort out at committee—this bill plays on an emotional subject that we hold very dear to us. It makes it easy for objective judgment to become clouded if we don't carefully study it, and I think it deserves all the debate it will get in this House. We are responsible to ensure that this bill ends up as worthy legislation that will truly help Ontario families and will not become just another piece of the Wynne government's good-intentioned, little-substance, window-dressing bills: an idea that looks nice on paper but does little to actually help the families in very difficult and trying times. We need to make sure there's substance to this. My fear is that this bill actually lacks the substance that it needs to really have the effect that I think is intended, and well-intended.

First, we must remember that to truly help Ontario families, we have to climb out of the impending \$30-billion debt hole that this government has walked us into. We have to become serious about clearing up our debt and deficit, first and foremost. From this government's budget, they've not demonstrated to all of us that they are still serious about paying down the debt and deficit. Indeed, it's the fifth consecutive deficit budget that this government has presented to Ontario taxpayers. I guess with this bill they got a little more creative by trying to pin its costs on the feds through EI, which is presumptuous at best.

That leads me to a greater issue here, Speaker. First, there is no money, as was alluded to earlier. This bill has no money attached to it for support of people in this situation. Maybe that's why the Liberals have decided to try to put it through with the aim that the feds will pay. I don't know where such an immense sense of entitlement comes from. You simply don't make bills on behalf of another entity. That's more than presumptuous. It's like me promising my constituents the Liberals will make good on their campaign promises or make good on their promises to get this province's finances back on track. We still see very little evidence, if any evidence, of that at all. It just doesn't work.

Is this government honestly going to expect that the federal government will pick up the tab for Ontario? Really? Is that what this bill is expecting will happen? As I said, it is extremely presumptuous if that's the case.

We can't let this bill become another example of the government's inability to carefully plan and execute what it has promised Ontarians. Hopefully, when this bill gets to committee, we can work to ensure this piece of legislation is simply not just another empty promise.

We also can't let this Liberal government just conveniently point the finger at the federal government if this doesn't work out. Pointing fingers at others is something this government has become habitually good at, just like they did after the G20 and in the wake of the Ornge scandal, never mind the gas plant scandal. The gas plant dumping debacles—I don't even know what count we're up to in document dumps. We used to actually be able to say, there's the first document dump, the second document dump—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Yeah, something like that. A few million, as the Attorney General says. Thanks for that.

But it further proves that this Liberal government is often not prepared to take full accountability for their actions. That's the real fear that Ontarians have right now. They don't trust this government to follow through on their actions and to be open and transparent with them. If we do not consider the economics of this bill, quite simply then the costs will be put onto small business owners as well, or employees themselves certainly will feel the burden of unpaid leave.

Small businesses generally have one or two employees. In fact, in the Barrie area I know that 75% of all the people who are employed are employed by businesses with four or less employees. So really, small business is big business. Small business is the main economic driver in our province. When businesses face the burden of having an employee gone, it is very stressful on them, as well as on the family.

Of course, you hope that employers are going to be accommodating in a best-case scenario. You really hope that they will be. The reality is that I think there are some employers who won't take this to heart and won't treat their employees fairly. That's why I think this legislation is needed.

But if one of the employees goes on leave, how does the government expect a small business to carry out its daily operation? We have to be cautious of adding an unnecessary burden to small and medium-sized businesses, especially at this time when their budgets are already stretched to the maximum.

Second, I don't know many people today who can actually afford to take more than a week of unpaid leave off of work. This could lead to a terrible situation for anyone to be in, having to be forced to make a decision between caring for a loved one or paying for the essentials of life; food and rent, for example.

Let's face it: The sky-high cost of living is a direct result of this government's poor economic management and fiscal and energy policies. Average hard-working Ontarians simply cannot afford to take so many weeks of unpaid leave. Take hydro costs, for example. The hydro bill for the average Ontario family has gone up 84% since 2003.

Additionally, I think it's more important to also talk about the problem of the deficiency that an employee must take a minimum of one week off to be eligible. As my colleagues have previously noted, there has to be more flexibility here. Sometimes caring for an ill loved one or dealing with the loss of a child or some of these issues that were mentioned needs an afternoon, or a day or two days off of work to go to a doctor's appointment, or a morning off for a sick relative, or a few days to take care of finances and prescriptions; that sort of thing. It may mean bringing a child to chemotherapy once a week. There needs to be more flexibility built into this bill. I'd love to be able to see that.

Furthermore, we just can't let this bill become another example of this government's poor planning. For one, it doesn't provide adequate guidelines for what constitutes serious medical conditions. If the government leaves such an important definition open and free for interpretation, it's highly likely that this intended bill could turn into a dysfunctional disaster. There has to be more clarity here. For example, an employee who should be qualified for leave may not be given one because the doctor does not think he or she has a serious medical condition. Good laws should have clear definitions, and I think Bill 21 falls short of this simple expectation.

The previous form of this bill, Bill 30, I believe—I'm glad that since then the government has made more of an effort to reach out to Ontarians to find out what the potential consequences may be for the average hard-working Ontarian. Before, because consultation was so limited, the government failed to address the real needs of Ontarians, and I think there has been more of an effort here.

Without more consultation, this bill may also create another unintended consequence on businesses in more unnecessary red tape. We need less regulation. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business estimates that red tape is costing Canadian businesses nearly \$6,000 per employee each year. That's about \$2,000 more per employee when compared to United States, who's one of



our main competitors in the world market. The negative economic effect of red tape on business in Ontario is obviously something this government doesn't understand, given the amount that they've created.

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The recent creation of the College of Trades, for example—or, as many like to call it, the tax on trades—demonstrates that this government is completely out of touch with what Ontario businesses need to thrive and survive and employ more people. Ontario can't afford meaningless and expensive window-dressing legislation. We need substance. We need to help hard-working Ontario families and businesses, and not just play with their emotions. Let's get down to business.

While I support this bill, I believe there's still work to be done. No one is going to disagree that this bill was drafted with the best of intentions, but each of its inadequacies could be potentially a ticking time bomb waiting to explode. That's why I'm eager to see this bill debated more and go to committee and be improved. We need safeguards in the bill that will ensure that this bill will do the best to help Ontario families dealing with some of the hardest issues that a family can face.

In addition, we need consultations with Ontarians to find out what the impacts are on Ontarians, and that they will not pay for any unforeseen consequences.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Once again, it's an honour to be able to rise in this House and speak on Bill 21 and comment on some of the remarks from the member from Barrie.

He said some things that we agree with. He spoke about families; he spoke about, "If you're going to want to make legislation, make it worthy legislation; let's not just talk about legislation for making a press release." I think that's one of the roles of this House: to stand in our place and bring things to the table that haven't been brought before.

He also spoke about, "This bill has no money attached." It is tough for a lot of families. You can say, "You can take eight weeks off," but a lot of people can't afford to take one day off. So it sounds nice in principle, but does it really work?

I'd also like to take a few seconds to talk about what the member from Nickel Belt said earlier this morning, because she raised a couple of issues, one especially that is the reason why we have to fully debate issues in the House. She raised the issue that aging is not a disease, and this bill does not cover people who take care of a parent or a family member who is frail due to aging, not necessarily sick—not that you can get a doctor's note that they're sick. That is a really, really good point.

Points like that are the reasons why I'm a bit offended by some members that we have to hurry up and we have to push this through. We could push things through without thinking, but is that really serving the people? Because that's when you lose the points that change legislation from a good press release to worthy legislation that

helps as many people as possible, and that is our role here.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The Attorney General.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I want to address the larger issue here, particularly those people who may be watching who are probably thinking to themselves at this point in time, "How is it possible that three parties basically agree on a bill and they've been talking about it for the last 10 to 12 hours"—at different time periods when you put it all together—"and it isn't moving forward quicker than that?"

I'll tell them why. When you have a majority government, basically the House leaders get together and arrive at a scheme that each bill will be given X number of hours of debate—some longer, some shorter, depending on the importance of the bill. Sometimes the government, as well—and I've been on both sides of the House—will say, "We've had enough debate," and they will invoke closure. No government likes to do that, but you have to do that every now and then if you want to get bills moving forward.

People should also understand that the real work that's being done on these bills is not so much in the House here—and I respect everybody's right to speak on the bill—but it's really done in committee. That's where all the details get ironed out.

So what we have going on here right now in this minority government situation, where a closure motion would never pass, is that you've got the Conservative Party basically saying—and I know what you're saying—is that, "We've got the right to speak for 20 minutes for each and every member." They've got about 40 members, or a few less than that, so they can speak for 800 minutes, which is X number of hours, on each and every bill, whether they agree with us or not. That is filibustering, and that's what doesn't make this place work.

There are some really important issues that should be discussed here that aren't being discussed. I think the people of Ontario should understand that. They should talk to their Conservative members, if they have one in their riding, and say, "Let's get on with the business of governing. Get your work done. Get these bills through committee and let's really implement them as soon as possible for the welfare of the people of Ontario."

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** The member for Barrie gave a fine speech this morning. I was glad to be here to hear it. He, I think, showed this House why the people of Barrie entrusted him with the responsibility of serving them here last October 2011, and why he deserves to be re-elected when the election eventually does in fact come.

This important bill—the Attorney General is quite right; this is an important piece of legislation and certainly that's why members of the Legislature from our side of the House want to bring forward the ideas and the concerns of their constituents, as well as our support in



principle for this piece of legislation, this Bill 21, because I think we all agree that there are many circumstances where families do need some leave from work and it's important that employers understand that, too.

But I think we also need to recognize that the bill has to be given thorough discussion and needs to go to committee and that there will be an opportunity, hopefully, for public hearings, because this bill impacts a lot of people, not just the individuals who require the leave, including the business owners, of course. I would hope, expect and anticipate that the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, for one, would want to bring forward their ideas and suggestions so that we can improve this bill in the public interest.

The Attorney General seems to forget that the House was prorogued by the outgoing McGuinity government for some four months, and it makes it seem a little bit insincere on their part when they complain about the pace of legislation going through this House when in fact they shut down this place for more than four months, which of course really stopped, to a large degree, I would argue, dimmed the lights of democracy in the province of Ontario, because during that time there was no opportunity for the Ontario Legislature to sit, to deliberate on important issues like Bill 21 and the principle within it, and we weren't able to hold the government to account. I think that has to be put on the table, as well as the right of opposition members to speak on important issues. We are elected by our constituents to come here to represent their views, their beliefs and their values, and we submit that we will continue to do that as long as we are here. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** J'aimerais remercier le député de Barrie pour ses commentaires. Je crois que ce qu'il a apporté à la table, vraiment, va nous aider à avoir un meilleur projet de loi. On est en train de parler d'aïdants naturels. Pour moi, il y a un aidant naturel qui me vient en tête, et c'est M. Yvon Goudreau.

C'est un homme de mon comté, de Chelmsford, qui prend soin de son épouse, Shirley. Shirley est à la maison et veut demeurer à la maison, et lui, il fait tout en son pouvoir pour qu'elle demeure à la maison. Yvon Goudreau, c'est un aidant naturel exceptionnel et il commence à être âgé. Il a plus de 80 ans. Tout ce qu'il demande, c'est d'être capable de dormir le soir. Il prend soin de sa femme de 6 heures le matin jusqu'à 10 heures le soir. À 10 heures le soir, il aimerait pouvoir dormir sa nuit pour être là pour aider sa femme le lendemain et pour faire ce que tous les aidants naturels font : profiter au maximum des gens qui nous entourent, de pouvoir vivre avec eux et de demeurer dans leur maison.

Il est venu me voir plusieurs fois pour dire : « France, j'ai besoin d'aide. Il faut que je dorme la nuit. Ma femme a besoin d'aide pendant la nuit. Il faut que je me repose. » La première ministre, M<sup>me</sup> Kathleen Wynne, était dans mon comté il y a deux semaines. Il est même allé la voir pour lui dire : « J'ai besoin d'aide. » Je suis

allée plaider son histoire avec notre centre d'accès aux soins communautaires pour qu'il ait de l'aide le soir, et toujours pas. Tu sais, on a des projets de loi qui ont des beaux titres. Oui, on veut aider nos aidants naturels, mais dans les cas comme le cas de M. Goudreau, où il a besoin d'aide, l'aide n'est pas là. J'aimerais qu'on change ça. Merci.

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**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Barrie, you have two minutes for a response.

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Thank you, Speaker. I'd like to thank the member from Timiskaming-Cochrane, the Attorney General, the member from Nickel Belt and the member from Wellington-Halton Hills for their participation in this debate.

I will say, Speaker, that debate is important. It's not always about whether we all agree on something or not; I think it's about what we all think about these bills. In this particular case, it's correct. We do agree that this bill needs to go through, but I think we also should be able to agree that this bill needs to go through its due process so it can be as good as it can be. I'd like to think that the government is open enough to understand that there's value to all of us and all the input that we bring in this House. Not all of us sit in the committee, unless we want to go to Committee of the Whole on it—I'm game for that. But you know what? We all have the right to speak to this bill. We all have input. I have specific input I want to give to it, and I believe I did today. I won't apologize for that. We can't even begin to shrink from our responsibilities in this place. This is one of our responsibilities, and I'm proud to execute it. This is about getting things done and getting them done right. Not fast all the time is best, right? We have to make sure that we cover all the bases and we make sure all these things are covered.

There are some misgivings of this bill. This does present some problems for employers. They need input into this. They need to have their concerns addressed. Employees who may or may not benefit from this bill need to have their issues addressed. We're looking at some legislation that looks good. It's great window dressing, and it has great intentions. I really do believe that. But a lot of the people who need to benefit from it won't be able to. We just assume that it's going to get picked up by EI. I can only assume that's what the government is assuming when they put this bill through, because these people aren't going to have much other option. And a minimum of one week to be eligible for the leave? It needs to be changed. We need fulsome debate. This needs to go to committee and get done for the people of Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I'm pleased to rise to give my comments on this particular bill. I want to apologize to my friend across the way, the Attorney General, for not having remembered his ministry a while ago. Maybe it's because we have an outstanding file between me and him that he never got back to me. So, since he forgot about

getting back to me about it, I'm kind of throwing the stone back. I'm sure Isabel out of Manitouwadge would really like to hear us talking to each other. We'll touch base after the file today. Again, I do appreciate the comments that he made.

Again, I pointed out earlier the reason why we're talking about this bill this morning. We need to give credit where credit is due, and that's to the member from Nickel Belt. For five years—I think for longer than five years—she was working extremely hard on the tanning bed bill. She was doing the work. She was going out talking to individuals. She was going out, making sure—bringing these issues forward, and after a prorogued session, we got this idea, this great idea, which seems to be a theme that is happening with this government—it was taken in by one of the Liberal members, and we dealt with the tanning bed issue. We had several discussions on that tanning bed issue bill, and we had an overall consensus.

We've been talking about it for, like I said, at least five years. We finally got it moved forward. That is the reason why—because the tanning beds is what we were supposed to talk about for the entire balance of this week. This bill was nowhere near on the radar. So for the members, for the Attorney General across the way to say that individuals are filibustering—I think what we're doing is a very democratic process, to talk about our issues and what our constituents are telling us from back home, and bringing those issues forward. I think that's very important, because by having these discussions, that's how we're going to be able to enhance this bill.

For the people that are listening, they're actually engaging in the discussions that we're having right now. Those who are interested in moving this bill forward have an opportunity to collect the information that is being discussed through this House, and the opportunity they have as individuals to come forth and give their testimonial in front of the committee—that's what they're looking forward to. So it's not wasting time. We are moving forward with it, and I think it's everybody's right and opportunity to talk about what's going on back home.

Now I'm going to use this opportunity to talk about—I'd love to use this opportunity to talk about many things. I'd love to talk this morning about the job cuts that are happening in ServiceOntario and MNR offices across northern Ontario, but that's not what we're talking about here this morning. Those individuals are also worried about this bill because they're weighing the decisions that they're going to have to make: "If I take a leave, am I going to have a job? Will I be here tomorrow morning? I don't know if I'm going to be here."

These individuals who work through the MNR and over at ServiceOntario kiosks provide a huge service for all of our communities. A lot of them—and I know these ServiceOntario agents go over and above the call—would actually help some of these individuals fill out these applications. Once we agree on this process to get family members with them—because in northern Ontario we

just don't have those regular resources; the individuals that you deal with are your neighbours. It's your aunt that's working over at this kiosk. These are essential services and important services that we need to maintain in northern Ontario and in our communities.

Now, again, I really do want to talk about the caregiver bill but I would also like to talk this morning about the operating costs of small water treatment plants across northern Ontario, particularly in Algoma-Manitoulin. I have the community of the North Shore. I have the community of Serpent River and those areas, and also Manitowaning, who are facing huge, huge costs with water bills, but that's not what we're talking about this morning. That's important, but those are things that those individuals are talking to me about. But then again, they are also faced with making certain decisions. "Will I be able to afford to take care of my mother? If I can't afford to provide for my family and if I can't afford to pay my bills with the municipality because of the high operating costs of our water treatment plants, I can't do it."

So those are some of the things that people are telling me about. When we're talking about clean and safe water—just clean, safe water that you can actually drink. We enjoy drinking the water that we have here, but I still have in Algoma-Manitoulin people who can't even go to their kitchen tap and pour a glass of water and drink it. That's important, too. But we're talking about the caregiver bill here this morning. Now we're talking about water. I have a lot of water, and right now my heart and my mind are with the communities that I have back home: Johnson and Macdonald, Meredith and Aberdeen Additional, Huron Shores and Plummer Additional—all these townships have declared a state of emergency because of too much water.

I indulge you, Mr. Speaker, to give me the leniency to talk about these communities. They're going to be going through some very difficult times. Why? Because some of their loved ones can't reach them. The waters that have come down have basically kept them away from being reunited from their family members. Communities are working diligently. I've talked with Minister Meilleur, who has been working with the communities, and also with Minister Jeffrey, who has been also assisting with the areas and making sure that the resources are there. Those are issues that are important to me this morning, Mr. Speaker, and those are the things that matter most to me this morning.

But we're talking about the caregiver bill this morning, and I'm going to get back to that bill very shortly. But I wanted to highlight some of the important issues that are going on in Algoma-Manitoulin. Those are the issues that are front and centre with me this morning.

As I mentioned in some of my comments that I made yesterday, I have this wonderful, wonderful neighbour. Her name is Georgine Boucher. I look at her as a nanny. She takes care of our place when we're not around. She keeps her eye out. She makes sure that nobody is coming into the household, and if there is something, she makes sure she documents it and she watches it. She does have a



daughter; she's a teacher, and she does have a good son-in-law who would take care of her, but we also live right next door to her so my wife is also there to help her if ever she needs in need. But she's one of those lucky ones.

There are many, many Georgine Bouchers in my riding of Algoma-Manitoulin who don't have the luxury of having good neighbours or even having a neighbour. They are stuck in an isolated area and they don't have family members. Either their kids live far away or they don't have the opportunity to reach out to care for them. So, as an individual, and as many individuals across northern Ontario, they would like to have that opportunity to care for them.

But if you look at the definition—there are a lot of definitions here: spouse, parent, grandparent, stepson, father, stepchild, grandparent, step-grandparents, relatives, spouse, brother-in-law. But if you look at number 8, it says, "Any individual prescribed as a family member for the purpose of this section." As far as I'm concerned, she's a family member, and a lot of people feel that those individuals are family members. Those aren't addressed in this bill, and we'd like to see that.

I also have a wonderful father-in-law. He's a wonderful man and, well, he's sometimes stubborn. We do get along as long as we're not in the same room. But he, as well, is getting up there in age. Five years ago—I wish I had more time; you really would enjoy this story—he was diagnosed with cancer, so he lost a portion of his lung. Unfortunately, because of the scarring and everything, he can't do what he really enjoyed, which is his firewood. My wife and my mother-in-law—young as a cookie, but she as well is starting to feel her pains a little bit more. So part of my summer holidays that I had is that my wife felt the need to go care for her parents back home. We took three days and we went up there and we did what my father-in-law enjoyed doing his entire life, which is firewood. So we bucked it, we cut it, we split it, and we stored it. I'm glad I had that opportunity to do that.

As politicians and parliamentarians, we tend to lose what brings us close to our true values back home. It's actually something I enjoyed doing with my wife for a very, very long time. It was really enjoyable. I actually really enjoy doing the firewood. But not everybody has that opportunity to care. It wasn't that he was ill; he just needed a little bit of care. We need to find a way through this bill to actually accomplish that.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands recessed until 10:30 a.m.

*The House recessed from 1012 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I'm delighted to introduce, in the west members' gallery, my colleague from Thornhill, the honourable Peter Kent, MP. We work together in tandem—a great guy. Welcome to Queen's Park.

I'd also like to introduce, from the York Regional Police, the head of the diversity, equity and inclusion bureau, Inspector Ricky Veerappan.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'd like to ask my colleagues in the House to welcome two fantastic community volunteers from Don Valley West: Nawal Ateeq and Mohammad Wani. Welcome.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I would like to introduce, in the public gallery today, Alexandra Prefasi-Horning, who is the mother of our amazing page from Leeds-Grenville, Peyton. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I'd like to introduce, in the east members' gallery, Mr. Jeff Mole from the Trillium Energy Alliance. Please welcome him to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** I would like to welcome delegations from the Radiation Safety Institute of Canada, the Ontario Lung Association and the Canadian Cancer Society.

In the members' gallery are the honourable Steve Mahoney, a former member of this House and also a former member of the House of Commons; Mr. Tim Armstrong, a former deputy minister of this government; Mike Haynes; and Natalia Mozayani.

Also, from the Ontario Lung Association, we have Elizabeth Harvey and Connie Choy, and from the Canadian Cancer Society, Kelly Gorman. Please join me in welcoming these delegations. They are here to celebrate the introduction of radon awareness legislation by Dr. Shafiq Qadri.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I would ask you to help me welcome, in the members' gallery, the Honourable Suzanne Anton, the Attorney General and Minister of Justice for the province of British Columbia. She is joined by her deputy minister, Richard Fyfe; and her chief of staff, Evan Southern.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I'd like to introduce my friend Jeff Mole, a community energy activist from the Muskoka area.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I'd like to welcome a visitor and friend from my riding of Thunder Bay—Superior North. Judy Flett is a well-respected educator, currently serving at Lakehead University as the programs coordinator in the department of aboriginal education.

A valued leader in the region and a mentor in the field and a mentor in the field of aboriginal education, Judy was instrumental in developing and implementing a successful youth entrepreneurship program in Far North communities working with the Right Honourable Paul Martin. Her contributions are numerous. I'm pleased to welcome Judy Flett.

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** I'd like to introduce Ron Barr, who is president of the Greater Ottawa Truckers Association. He's here with us today.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** The member from Carleton-Mississippi Mills also should have acknowledged a lovely lady from Carleton-Mississippi Mills and Ottawa. His lovely wife, Janet, is here.

But I also have another introduction. The other day, I had introduced my friend and said that had left. Re-



member my friend who I had worked for Joe Clark with? He is here today. You don't seem to be howling about Mr. Clark today. My friend Ed Sem is also here, from British Columbia.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm sure the member from Nepean—Carleton is going to get some good brownie points from the member from—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No, no, he was thankful.

As is the tradition of the Speaker, I will introduce a former member, Mr. Steve Mahoney from Mississauga West in the 34th and 35th Parliaments. Welcome, Steve.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My question is to the Premier, following up on yesterday's questions where I called upon you to keep your promise to the people of Scarborough when it comes to the subway that you had promised during the by-election. Yesterday, I know you met with TTC chair Karen Stintz, who had a very similar viewpoint that I did. So if I didn't convince you, hopefully Councillor Stintz did.

A simple question, Premier: Will you keep your promise to the people of Scarborough from the by-election and build that subway, just as council asked?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Our commitment to the people of the GTHA and beyond has been to build transit, and we are doing that and we will keep that commitment, Mr. Speaker. We have committed that we have \$1.4 billion, plus another \$320 million that we commit to building a subway in Scarborough. That commitment is on the table. We will move forward with that.

Quite frankly, I have to say that Karen Stintz has been an advocate for transit. She has been an advocate for transit all along, which is actually not the case of the party opposite. The party opposite has not supported us on building transit because, as you know, there are many, many projects going on around the province. We have not had the support of the official opposition. I'm glad to see now that they are interested in building transit, and I look forward to working with them as we make those investments that are so necessary for the economic well-being and growth of the GTHA and the province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Let's be direct about the record, Speaker. Leslie Frost built the Yonge subway, Robarts built the Bloor line, Bill Davis extended the Bloor line, lengthened Yonge to North York—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I was on a roll, Speaker.

Mike Harris built the Sheppard line.

The number of subway stops the Liberals have built in Toronto: zero. The number the PCs have built: 64.

All we're asking, Premier—you said you were going to be different than Dalton McGuinty. Will you keep your promise to the people of Scarborough, or are you going to weasel off the hook?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** That was an interesting litany of investing in subways. We stopped the Eglinton line at—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Prince Edward—Hastings, come to order. The member from Nepean—Carleton, come to order. The member from Renfrew, come to order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Oh, you didn't think I missed you, did you?

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Since we came into office in 2003, we've been investing in transit. We will continue to invest in transit. We will keep our commitment to the people of Scarborough to build the subway in Scarborough, Mr. Speaker, and that \$1.4 billion will go into building that line on the alignment that has been the alignment all along in the plan. That's the conversation that I had with Councillor Stintz yesterday. We will continue to make that investment, and I hope we'll be able to work with the city council in order to do that, because the people of Scarborough need that transit. We need to make that investment in order for the people of Scarborough to be able to have the access to their work and to their schools that they need.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** The Liberals may talk a good game. They may talk about subway stops; they may announce subway stops. Speaker, after 10 years of Liberal government, additional Liberal subway stops: zero.

And here's what I worry about: You made a promise in the by-election. Now you're trying to wiggle off the hook on that promise, it's clear. You send out your transportation minister, who, quite frankly, has the stability of a ball in a roulette wheel popping around. But gambling on a subway: That's a hell of a risk.

Why don't you actually stick to the plan, the city plan, the original plan, build it from Kennedy, Scarborough Town Centre to Sheppard? It's the right thing to do. Please keep your promise. Don't pull a Dalton McGuinty. Don't flip-flop. Do what you said you were going to do.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

1040

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the Leader of the Opposition knows that the people who are going to be

using the extension of the Spadina line are very excited about the opening of that line. I know that the Leader of the Opposition knows, because he actually lives quite close to the work that's being done on Eglinton Avenue, that there are holes that will not be filled in. Those holes are actually going to function and we're going to have the Eglinton Crosstown line because that's the investment that we have made.

One of the issues that I talked about with Councillor Stintz yesterday was that the federal government has not come forward to put money into an expanded version of the line that the city council would like to see. I said to Councillor Stintz, if she can find a way to bring that money forward then that's one thing. But the fact is that money has not been forthcoming. We have made the commitment. We're the only level of government that has made that commitment, and we will stick to that commitment of \$1.4 billion.

### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** My question is again for the Premier. Madam Premier, you just said you met with the chair of the TTC yesterday. Why didn't you meet with the chair of the TTC before you made your announcement—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I'm waiting for them to go back to John A. Macdonald and the railroad, Mr. Speaker. The reality is, these new Tories haven't built a subway. That group never, ever, laid a line. That group only filled it in. And I have met with—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Minister.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Thank you.

And yes, I have had several meetings over the summer with Karen Stintz, my dear friend over there, and the last time we offered them \$1.4 billion, the only money we had for a subway, the chair of the TTC answered us by declaring—while the press conference was going on—that it was dead on arrival. She wouldn't take the money. She couldn't take yes for an answer, and failed to support a joint strategy to get the federal government to the table.

I was just speaking to Mr. Kent pointing out that Ms. Raitt and Mr. Lebel haven't met with me in six months. Your federal members won't have a conversation—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** Madam Premier, every time the Minister of Transportation opens his mouth, he either insults someone or releases a new plan. I wouldn't trust him to run a one-car funeral.

Premier, what I want to know is: How do you plan on getting this transit built without the support of the TTC and the city of Toronto?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I have great respect for the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore, but I think we disagree on one thing: His idea of subway building is to pass a motion; ours is to write a cheque. Mr. Speaker, we don't need to go back to 1867 or 1967. All we have to do is look at the record of the members opposite: Lots of motions, not a single cheque; lots of subway stations closed; lines cancelled and filled in.

This government has boring machines right now under Eglinton, on the University line. We have more work; we have \$16.4 billion. We're the only party, the only government with serious money into this: 90% of the funding. They owe an apology to the people of Scarborough for misleading them—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** Speaker, this plan is full of holes. There isn't the money here to do what's needed. They're counting on the city of Toronto to put up money and they haven't even discussed the matter with them. They've also put forward a plan that the TTC says is not feasible technically. Now, how in the world can you responsibly go to the people of Scarborough and tell them you've got a plan that you haven't even researched?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Stop the clock.

I continue to try to find the decorum that I seek. When I'm speaking and people have to use their earpiece, that means others are speaking while I'm trying to make a point.

I'll remind members that I do not like when members' names are used in the House. I want ridings to be referred to or titles to be referred to. It does not elevate the debate; it actually lowers it and it becomes personal. Please stay on focus with what that request is. It will help the decorum rise.

Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** On this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, we kind of like engineers. As a matter of fact, we like evidence and we like engineers.

Metrolinx has a very competent set of engineers, and when proposals came forward, they were asked to evaluate them. Mr. Collins and the Metrolinx board have said very clearly the technology is feasible; this works.

We did not ask city council for a new plan or an alternative route. We said we want to stick with the existing route. We asked them whether they wanted an LRT or a subway. They said they wanted a subway. We said we will build the subway.

We have a process called iCorridor in the Ministry of Transportation. I think it is the most advanced engineering and planning tool in North America. It says that a subway doesn't make much sense; that actually, the original plan for LRT after Scarborough out to Sheppard is that—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Answer.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Councillor Thompson and Minister Duguid are going to look at those issues in a



thorough study and look at connectivity and take the time to do that. In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, we'll listen to the engineers.

### GOVERNMENT'S AGENDA

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. Before the session began, New Democrats put our priorities on the table. We want to ensure that the results people were promised are actually delivered: that home care wait times will go down, that youth unemployment will go down, that auto insurance rates go down, and that Queen's Park gets some new transparency from the Financial Accountability Office. But the Premier still hasn't set out an agenda, Speaker. She seems more interested in playing politics and making election threats than even she doesn't take seriously. Is the Premier going to keep playing games over issues she knows will be supported, or will she just get down to work?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let's just be clear that today, in fact, there will be a vote on the issue of the Financial Accountability Office, Mr. Speaker. So we are moving ahead with those commitments that we made.

The comments that I made at the beginning of the week about wanting to find those areas where all of us in this House could work together to pass legislation, to move ahead on issues where we could find agreement, like consumer protection, as an example; like the Financial Accountability Office—I thought it was important that we identify those areas. There is lots of room for continued wrangling on other issues, but where there is agreement, it seemed to me that it would make sense for us to agree that we would move ahead on those issues. That was my point at the beginning of the week. That remains my point, and I am pleased that we are moving ahead with some of those issues.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, Ontarians want to see their politicians focused on results for them, not on their own political interests. That's why New Democrats are focused on creating jobs, improving health care, making life affordable and making government accountable.

There's a lot of work to do, but the Premier seems much more interested in picking fights over legislation than we've already agreed to pass instead of focusing on the work that she needs to do here. Is the Premier ready to deliver on the commitments she has made or can we expect more of the same political game-playing?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, part of the delivery on those results is making sure that we get legislation through the House. That's part of what I have to do, what we have to do as elected members, to make sure that we can deliver on those results. There are three bills moving forward this week, which I'm very pleased about. It's exactly what I was talking about. Consumer protections: We've got all-party support. The Leader of the Opposition voted for it. That's a good thing. We're moving ahead on the tanning bed legislation. That had all-party support—and on the Financial Accountability Office, as I said. That's the point I was making.

I feel very, very good that we're able to move that legislation ahead for the very reason that the leader of the third party identifies. We need to get results. We need to make sure that we act on those commitments, and that's what I'm committed to doing.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** In the lead-up to the spring budget, we made it pretty clear that we need a fair and balanced approach to balancing the books. The government's plan to create a new \$1.3-billion tax loophole for corporations so they can write off the HST on wining and dining their clients was a cost that we just simply cannot afford here in the province.

**1050**

Now, the Premier and the Minister of Finance said that they'd take action on that file, but nothing has happened. If the Premier is looking for some priorities, that's one the people need her to deliver on. Speaker, why hasn't she made it a priority?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Here's an area where there's a disagreement about what has happened or hasn't happened. Before the leader of the third party started to ask these questions in the House, the finance minister had been in touch with the federal government and had raised this issue. He has also made the point repeatedly that it's not a loophole. It's nothing new; it's the rollout of the HST. So we did make it a priority. And I'm not saying that the third party didn't raise the profile of the issue; they did, and that's as it should be, but we have taken action. We cannot act unilaterally, and so the finance minister has taken the appropriate action by being in touch with the federal government, and we will continue to pursue that.

### GOVERNMENT'S AGENDA

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also to the Premier. People want to see their government deliver results, but all they see from the Liberals is more games. We worked hard last spring to get some help for drivers paying the highest auto insurance rates in the country, and commitments were made in the budget. But this is what people have seen: the government working overtime to help insurance companies pad their bottom line while they're moving at a glacial pace when it comes to helping drivers get some fairness and some relief. Is the Premier ready to make this a priority?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** We've made it a priority, and the finance minister made it clear that we are acting on the commitment to reduce auto insurance rates by 15%. It is easy to craft a sound bite about a complex issue, but I think it does a disservice to people to suggest that somehow the leader of the third party could snap her fingers and, all of a sudden, there would be an automatic 15% reduction across the province. That is not how insurance works, Mr. Speaker. The reality is that there are costs in the system that need to be removed. We have issues of fraud in the system that need to be removed. We

are working with the system to make sure that those costs are removed so that there can be a reduction across the province. And the fact is, it's an average reduction across the province.

We will see that happen. We are working on making that happen, and that was our commitment.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The government seems to snap their fingers and get the auto insurance industry some pretty good bonuses to their bottom line, but they can't seem to snap their fingers and help out consumers. That's a bit of a problem.

We're taking a step towards future government accountability with the New Democrat plan for the Financial Accountability Office, but people are expecting real answers when it comes to the Liberal record on the gas plants. Now, the Premier insisted that the public inquiry wouldn't be needed because the committee would be able to get all questions answered. But this is what Ontarians have seen this week: Every time I've asked if the Premier will support expanding the mandate of the gas plants committee so we can ask Liberal insiders about their interference with the Speaker, she dodges that question.

It's pretty simple: Will she do her part so Ontarians can get answers, or will she keep protecting senior Liberal insiders?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I thought we were talking about auto insurance, so I'm just going to say something else about auto insurance and then I will come to this other question, which seems like it's a different question. But I just want to make sure that the leader of the third party knows that in a memo that was an internal memo in her party on August 23, the statement about us, about the Liberals, was, "We cannot truthfully say they've broken a promise...." That's an NDP—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** —memo. So the reality is we're following through on our commitment. She knows it, Mr. Speaker. She knows that we are following through on what we said about auto insurance, and we will continue to do that.

On the other issue, I think I've answered the question many times. I'm open to having the questions answered that are asked at committee.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I tried to give the member a little bit of leeway in the posing of the question and its relationship to the first question, and it didn't seem to match, so I'm going to ask the member to stay focused on the original question in her final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Well, Speaker, the questions are about the government's promises in getting results on the things that they've promised. They've been pretty consistent, so I'll continue on that vein.

I can say to the Premier—through you, to the Premier, Speaker—that making a promise is one thing, but delivering it at a glacial, glacial, glacial pace is something that we're quite worried about, and that's, I think, some-

thing that Ontarians are worried about, because what they're tired of is, instead of their priorities taking precedence, they're tired of political games taking precedence here, Speaker. They want their government to actually deliver results and they want their government to actually be accountable.

Now, will the Premier stop posturing, stop playing games and get down to work by keeping the promises that she made in the budget?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank the member for that.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I want to be clear with the people of Ontario that we are acting on every single one of the commitments that we made in the budget, Mr. Speaker. Our work this fall is about making sure that we put those commitments, those strategies, in place.

Over the summer, the Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment and the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities were working to make sure that the youth employment strategy was put in place, that those funds were there, that that \$295 million would be accessible for young people as they look for opportunities in the workforce.

The \$100 million for roads and bridges and infrastructure in rural and northern communities—we worked to make sure that those criteria are in place so that municipalities could apply for those funds.

Those are the things that are going to make a difference to people. Those are the commitments that we're acting on, including auto insurance. But every single one of the commitments that we made, we are taking action on.

## CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** My question is to the Minister of Labour. Minister, the Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act will shut the door on Quebec contractors coming into Ontario. In spite of countless labour mobility agreements between Ontario and Quebec, Ontario contractors are stopped from working in Quebec, while Quebec contractors have full access to the eastern Ontario construction market. Ontarians want equal access to the Quebec construction market.

Minister, numerous workers have expressed their growing frustration with this gross unfairness. Will you support Ontario workers by demanding that Quebec take down their barriers to Ontario construction contractors and workers coming into Quebec?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister of Labour?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I want to thank the honourable member for the question, but, Speaker, our government is focused on creating more jobs for Ontarians. The honourable member's bill would do just the opposite. It will create trade barriers that will jeopardize—

*Interjection.*



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Northumberland—Quinte West, come to order.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** —infrastructure projects in our province and hurt jobs, not only across the province but especially in the city of Ottawa.

Speaker, what's been approached, in terms of the private member's bill, is the wrong approach. We've seen this bill before, when the Harris-Hudak government had the same bill before, and it did not work at that time. It resulted in a loss of jobs. It resulted in a court case, which the city of Ottawa lost, as a result of that particular piece of legislation. Speaker—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I remind you again that when somebody's answering from the answering side, there should be no noise—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** And no noise on the other side.

Please finish.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I'm done. Thank you, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** Minister, the original Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act became law in 1999 to solve this worker mobility problem with Quebec. It was repealed in 2006, when the government signed the agreement on labour mobility between Ontario and Quebec. Since 2006, the Quebec provincial government has reverted to their old ways, creating a regulatory system designed to punish Ontarians by shutting Ontario contractors out of the Quebec construction market.

Minister, will you and your eastern Ontario colleagues support the construction workers of eastern Ontario by voting for the Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act? Will you demand that Quebec open up their borders to Ontario construction workers?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister of Labour.

1100

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you very much, Speaker.

You know, don't take my word on the impact of the Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act. This is what the mayor of Ottawa had to say today: "The previous legislation did not correct concerns about worker mobility, and the exact same legislation is unlikely to do so in 2013. Therefore, I could not support your private member's bill," and that is to the honourable member.

But, Speaker, this is what John DeVries, the president of the Ottawa Construction Association, said—this is the construction association of Ottawa representing the industry: "Bringing back the Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act is not a solution. In essence, Ontario was penalizing our workforce—not exactly the desired outcome."

Lastly, this is what Richard Hayter from the building trades in Ottawa said about this bill: "This act certainly won't make"—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** My question is to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure. Last week, the minister blindsided everyone and announced an uncosted and technically challenged subway proposal. By acting unilaterally, this minister and this government have created unprecedented division and chaos in Scarborough transit planning. This action is setting back new transit in Scarborough, which is already a decade behind schedule.

Why didn't the minister work with city council and the TTC to get them onboard so we can finally get some shovels in the ground in Scarborough?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Councillor Thompson, who is the city councillor in the area and the chair of the economic development committee, will be shortly convening a meeting with my colleague Minister Duguid to address the planning and connectivity issues.

We looked very carefully at this line—and it was not me; we have two ministries. The Ministry of Transportation went through iCorridor, which looks at ridership, which we estimate—and I don't mean me, I mean the experts—at about 10,000 riders on this portion of the line. There is not that level of ridership after the Scarborough Town Centre and there isn't the evidence yet to justify a subway beyond that point. As a matter of fact, the original plan in the negotiations with the city seems to suggest that the BRT and LRT and the other projects in that connectivity, on the evidence, on the engineering, make more sense.

The person sowing chaos here is the member opposite and the party opposite, who can't produce an option that's viable, nor can they support any funding, any revenue, and they constantly undermine efforts to fund the subways that the Scarborough folks want.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Well, here is the support that the minister has for his scheme thus far: The CEO of the TTC says the plan is technically challenged. The chair of the TTC says the plan doesn't meet the city's transit objectives. Experts like Steve Munro say the plan simply cannot be built for \$1.4 billion. This minister has no partners. The minister has insulted the people he needs to get this done.

When will the Liberal government drop the hubris, get back to the conversation and build the relationships needed to move forward with transit?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, I didn't develop iCorridor. I'm not the executive vice-president, Jack Collins, and his engineering team, who said this was feasible. And I don't think Ms. Stintz or the member opposite is an engineer, and I'm not. So that was the ruling from Metrolinx. That was quite clear. This government would not proceed on something that wasn't engineeringly feasible, and took great care to make sure that it was. As a matter of fact, I released the other day

iCorridor and GeoPortal, which are the most advanced planning tools that look at ridership and land use, and we have a highly—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** —with those who want to work with us.

When Ms. Stintz declared that the \$1.4 billion was going to result in a plan that has no business plan—Mr. Flaherty and I are both waiting for the business plan on this alternate route that has never been seen by anyone. We're actually sticking to the original route that has been researched and on which millions of dollars have been spent. You're proposing a plan that's been pulled out of the air.

### PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

**Ms. Soo Wong:** My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. This summer, the government implemented changes in the way physiotherapy services are offered in Ontario. I understand that these changes were necessary to crack down on fraud and improve access to physiotherapy for Ontarians in all parts of Ontario. Still, some of the seniors in my riding of Scarborough–Agincourt are worried that these changes can make physiotherapy service less accessible to them going forward.

Speaker, through you to the minister, can she tell my constituents why these changes are necessary and also reassure the seniors in my riding that they will continue to receive the physiotherapy they need?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I'm very grateful to the member from Scarborough–Agincourt for this question, because I do welcome the opportunity to clarify some of the issues around our changes to physiotherapy.

I want to be very clear, Speaker: Eligibility for physiotherapy has not changed. The people who were eligible before are still eligible. What has changed is our delivery model. These changes will allow us to deliver physiotherapy to far more people and to expand exercise programs and falls prevention programs. Speaker, 200,000 more Ontarians will be able to access services as a result of these changes.

We're doubling the number of physiotherapy clinics so people across the province, no matter where they live in this great province, will have access to clinic-based physiotherapy. We're also bringing physiotherapy into family health care, so our family health teams, nurse-practitioner-led clinics—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm sure the many seniors in my riding will be delighted to hear that physiotherapy services are being expanded.

I understand that these are the first major changes to the way physiotherapy is being delivered and billed in over 40 years. I know my constituents will be happy to hear that the government is modernizing physiotherapy in Ontario. But there are many seniors and other people who require physiotherapy in Scarborough–Agincourt

and across Ontario who are worried that they will see interruption in their services as these changes are being implemented.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister, can she tell the House what is being done to ensure those who need physiotherapy services will continue to receive them?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** My highest priority is to ensure that seniors get the services they need to stay healthy, mobile and independent. We are working with LHINs, with the community care access centres, with the community clinics and with other partners to ensure a smooth transition to the model.

Speaker, I'm happy to provide an update to this House. Assessments are taking place across the province. People are receiving physiotherapy under the new model. This is very good news: 12 of the 14 LHINs have now eliminated the wait list for in-home physiotherapy. This is great news.

More than 700 sites across this province have exercise programs and falls prevention programs in place. St. Hilda's Towers in Toronto, for example, has falls prevention classes; they started last Friday. Resident assessments are ongoing. Seniors are already benefitting, and as we expand this even more, seniors will benefit from these changes.

### HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** My question is to the Premier and Minister of Agriculture and Food. The 2012 Liberal budget, aided and abetted by the NDP, kicked the legs out from under the horse racing industry. They did so with no consultation and no concern for the thousands of jobs that would be lost, mainly in rural Ontario. But the government did create three new part-time jobs for former cabinet ministers, and it also created work for consulting and communications firms.

My question to the Premier: Can she tell us what her government's Horse Racing Industry Transition Panel has cost taxpayers so far?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you for the question. I know that the member opposite, because he represents a riding that is quite rural, understands the importance of having a sustainable horse racing industry. I also know that he understands how much people like John Snobelen, Elmer Buchanan and John Wilkinson know about the horse racing industry. He knows how important it is that we have people with expertise giving us advice.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Attorney General, just when I'm going to nail them, you do something. I'm not going to nail them, but consider yourself nailed.

Premier.

1110

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I know that—

*Interjection.*



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Now I'll nail you.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the member opposite wants the horse racing industry to be sustainable. I've written a letter to the panel. I've asked for a five-year plan. They are working on that five-year plan, working on the recommendations, and I look forward to acting on those recommendations.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Premier, it took a freedom-of-information request to learn the truth. The panel billed taxpayers for compensation, expenses and outside consultants. Their grand total so far is \$526,649. The Premier's new instructions to the panel will push the bill even higher. Panelists are billing taxpayers \$750 a day for attending meetings and often for just making conference calls. Even a laundry bill was approved. We need to know how this Premier justifies putting thousands out of work and then spending over half a million dollars cleaning up the government's mess. Does the Premier really think that this is the way to support the horse racing industry and win back rural Ontario? If so, the Premier is sadly mistaken.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we are paying John Snobelen and Elmer Buchanan and John Wilkinson to do this work. Yes, they have billed expenses. There was an administrative error—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'd like you to hear this: There was an administrative error made in terms of the billing of a dry-cleaning bill that has been—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'd like to hear it.

**Interjection:** Me too.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's not helpful. Finish, please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** There was an error made. There was a bill approved that shouldn't have been—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Lambton, come to order. Right as soon as I sit down, it doesn't start back up again. The intent is to get it quiet.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** That bill that was approved in error has been paid back. All of the expenses now fall into line with the guidelines of the OPS.

The point is, though, I thought that the party opposite wanted to see the horse racing industry on a solid footing. I thought that the party opposite wanted to see race dates and wanted to see breeders in good shape. That's what we want on this side of the House.

#### CHILD CARE CENTRES

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Minister of Education. This morning, parents and children at École Napoléon in my riding were told that effectively their

child care centre was being shut down on Monday. Twelve children and their families are being thrown into crisis over child care. Parents who have to go to work on Monday are scrambling to find a place for their children. Children are asking why they're going to be separated from their friends. This school and its unlicensed day care have been inspected by your ministry for the past three years and no one noticed that an unlicensed child care operation was going on. Why did it take three years to notice and speak to the school?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Thank you for your question. You obviously have raised some issues around inspections in child care, and I will absolutely look into that. It's not an issue that I've been advised of. This is the first time that I've heard about it, but I do commit to look into the issue and see if we can figure out what went on there.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Minister, you have a lot of looking to do. Chaos could have been avoided at École Napoléon if, a few inspections ago, a few years ago, the operator had been told, "You need to have a licence for doing this kind of child care work." Now parents are facing this upheaval. They're facing chaos. They're trying to figure out how to pull their lives together. They're trying to deal with their children who are upset. If the operator is willing to move quickly and comply, is your ministry willing to move quickly to licence them?

*Applause.*

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I appreciate the applause but I have a second part: Will you consider giving them a provisional licence if they meet the criteria so that the children don't have to be moved out of the school?

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** Thank you again for the follow-up. As I said, I have not been advised of this particular situation, so obviously I cannot make a commitment to take any particular next step. But I will absolutely look into this. The member has made a couple of suggestions that may prove useful. I will ask my staff to look into those particular suggestions as well.

#### WORKPLACE SAFETY

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** My question today is for the Minister of Labour. Minister, Ontario's construction industry is an important part—a crucial part, in fact—of our economy. At a time when we need more apprenticeships, more jobs and a stronger economy, construction companies continue to positively invest in our province.

In my community of Vaughan, construction workers play a particularly important role, building our neighbourhoods from the ground up. Unfortunately, this summer, we saw multiple fall-related injuries and fatalities in the construction industry. I also recall, of course, a very serious scaffolding tragedy that occurred on Christmas Eve just a few years ago.

Speaker, through you to the minister: With construction workers playing such a crucial role both in my riding and across Ontario, what is our government doing to ensure the safety of our construction workers so that tragedies of this kind can be avoided?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I thank the member for the question and his commitment to the safety and the protection of all workers.

Speaker, when Ontarians go to work, we all want to make sure that they go home safely as well. Workplace safety is the Ministry of Labour's number one priority, something that we work towards every single day. We are working hard to ensure that both employees and employers know their rights and are fulfilling their responsibilities. Therefore, we make sure that we are enforcing the law to its fullest extent.

For instance, the member mentioned the Christmas Eve tragedy that took about four workers' lives. I'm proud to report that our government appealed the decision of the lower court, which had laid a fairly low fine. We were able to successfully increase the fine to the company to \$750,000, the largest in Canadian history.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** I want to thank the minister for his answer and also for his continuing energy on this particular file. It's very, very important for my community, for the industry and for our entire province. I am glad to hear that the Ministry of Labour and the minister are focused on ensuring the safety of workers on construction sites, particularly in relation to falls.

It is important that we continue to take these kinds of proactive steps to prevent avoidable accidents. Both my constituents and all people across our province should know what kind of measures they themselves can take to keep our construction workers safe on the job.

Minister, could you please speak to the two blitzes that you've mentioned and explain how these types of initiatives will benefit workers in our construction industry?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** The Ministry of Labour, as the member alluded, will be conducting a blitz on roofing awareness and fall hazards in the construction industry. These blitzes will focus on worker safety at heights and take enforcement action against those who fail to adequately train and protect our workers.

There are many ways to keep workers safe at heights and prevent them from falls through floor-opening covers, travel-restraint systems and fall-arrest systems. Enforcement during the fall hazards safety blitz will primarily focus on the implementation and effectiveness of these varied solutions.

We will also be checking that workers using fall-protection equipment have adequate training, as well as ensuring that guardrails and covers are adequately maintained to ensure that they are protecting workers properly.

Speaker, with these safety mechanisms in place in construction sites across Ontario, we believe we can make a difference in reducing injuries in our construction sector, and ultimately save lives.

#### TEACHERS' COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** My question is to the Minister of Education. Despite telling us last spring that the reopened teachers' negotiations from the legislative contracts wouldn't cost us anything, yesterday you actually admit-

ted that, after fiddling with those contracts, there would be a new cost—but you had no idea what it actually was. You said, "I want to get the accurate number," so you "struck an implementation cost estimate working group."

Minister, that's why I asked the auditor to intervene. Yesterday and the day before, a senior education source told the Toronto Sun twice that the estimated cost could be as high as \$500 million. I've publicly estimated anywhere between \$300 million to \$500 million once the unions' demands for me-too clauses are implemented.

1120

Minister, my questions are these. Why did you tell this House last spring that the enhancements were savings when yesterday you admitted what we knew all along: that it was going to cost taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars? And what kind of minister, during deficit financing, goes out and gives massive payouts to unions without knowing the true cost six months ago, still not knowing what the true cost is today?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Could we just clarify what the situation is here? In January, when we announced the savings that were related to the 2012-14 collective agreements, we announced that the savings were \$1.8 billion. That continues to be the case, which is what I have consistently told you. We have found, since January, some additional savings related to the collective agreement, and that is the money that has been directed towards the enhancements.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Where did you get the money? People need to know.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** She just told you.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I just told you. When we found additional savings, they were redirected. The important thing here is that we have classroom peace because we agreed to have discussions with our—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Before you move on, I would like to remind everybody that questions are put through the Chair, and the answers are put through the Chair, which avoids some of the heckling responses.

Supplementary.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I can't really appreciate that clarification. I feel as though I may have been misled, as has the public, given the responses that we have received.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Withdraw, please.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I will withdraw, Speaker.

The clarification is passing strange. I don't know how you can have \$1.8 billion in savings and then increase people's gratuities at retirement, at maternity leave and at sick leave. Once again: The minister admitted to us yesterday in this House that she actually has no idea what the costs were this spring when she had a union giveaway to, I quote, her "friends."

She has refused to provide me and this House with details after numerous questions—in letters to her and order paper questions—where I asked specifically for her to outline the \$1.8 billion in savings and to outline exactly what those added costs were. She had said that she had peace in the education sector, yet we know that boards are still unable to sign agreements with the unions.



Back to her: Minister, why have your friends in the unions continued to obstruct local processes, even though you have given them exactly what they want, at a cost we have no idea—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Yes. I'm pleased to tell you that, as we had discussions with our partners, we absolutely had cost estimates at every point. The school boards challenged the cost estimates, we put together a committee to look at it, and in fact, our cost estimates were entirely reasonable.

In fact, we often found, when we got the information from the school boards, that the actual costs were less than the estimated costs. It is to the advantage of the taxpayer, I would say, that we have worked through the implementation committee process, because in identifying the true costs, we have actually found further savings.

### NUISANCE BEARS

**Mr. John Vanthof:** My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. Liberal budget cuts to the MNR have resulted in the cancellation of the live trapping and relocation of nuisance bears and have left people with a 1-800 tip line instead. Over the summer, there have been several near-fatal human-bear encounters across the north. Northerners feel abandoned by the ministry and don't even bother reporting problem bears anymore, since the ministry doesn't offer any physical assistance anyway.

In a recent news release, the minister stated that "the ministry is currently in the process of reviewing more effective options" for dealing with nuisance bears. Could the minister tell northerners what those options are?

**Hon. David Orazietti:** I certainly appreciate the question from the member. The member is well aware, as a northerner—as am I—of the ongoing challenges. From year to year, depending on the specific circumstances in northern Ontario, whether there's food availability with respect to a number of bears that are harvested each year, we have different circumstances in different communities. And in some communities, we have more prevalent issues than others. We've worked with those communities to ensure that we are giving them the assistance they need when it comes to supporting them and identifying their problems.

In fact, we have spent more money than any other jurisdiction in North America on our Bear Wise program, about \$34 million to date, helping and assisting communities right across northern Ontario.

But I certainly do acknowledge with respect to the member's comments that there are some communities in northern Ontario that are facing significant challenges around nuisance bears, and we're committed to working with them to find more effective solutions.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Once again, to the Minister of Natural Resources: Northerners have been forced to protect themselves against nuisance rogue bears, and for

those who aren't equipped to do so, their option is to phone a friend or, in a life-threatening situation, call the police, and then the municipalities pay the bill.

Because of this government's inaction or action, bears are increasingly seen as pests and marauders instead of the majestic animals that they really are.

Speaker, does the minister believe that ignoring rogue bears is good wildlife management, and is he willing to continue to put northerners' safety at risk?

**Hon. David Orazietti:** Absolutely, we are not interested in seeing anyone at risk. Public safety is paramount in these circumstances.

What I think the member should be aware of is that at the time the Conservative Party cancelled the spring bear hunt in 1999, we introduced the Bear Wise program and we also extended the fall bear hunt so that relatively the same number of bears would be harvested each year.

In fact, just the other day I received an email with respect to Mayor Politis in Cochrane, in the member's riding, in regard to a nuisance bear. The information that I have is that our bear technicians set up a trap with respect to this nuisance bear, which the OPP have identified as being a significant problem.

Our folks are out there responding where appropriate and when they're being called to do so, but I'm certainly interested in working with the member opposite and other northern members to find ways—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

### MICROBREWERIES

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** My question is for the Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment. Our government has put together a strong plan to help people across this province, a plan that will create jobs and give all Ontarians the chance to succeed. One of the key elements in our plan is to work with businesses and renew support across a variety of industries.

Your ministry recently announced its renewed support by extending the Ontario Microbrewery Strategy for two more years to help create jobs and expand the industry.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Economic Trade, Development and Employment: Could the minister please inform this House what this government is doing through the Ontario Microbrewery Strategy to help small brewers explore new marketing, training and tourism development opportunities across the province?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I thank the member from Oak Ridges—Markham for her great question.

I am pleased to inform the House of a recent funding announcement of \$1.2 million in annual funding our government has made to renew the Ontario Microbrewery Strategy from 2014 to 2016. This will help Ontario craft brewers better market and raise awareness of locally made lagers, ales, pilsners, porters and the all-important stouts. These are brewers like Steam Whistle, Mill Street, Muskoka Brewery and Flying Monkeys Craft Brewery. A little known fact about these brewers is that they are the largest purchaser of Ontario-grown hops.

This investment will help the craft beer industry right down the supply chain. By extending funding for the microbrewery strategy, our government will help to support the success of this important industry. This funding will not only support brewers themselves but will lead to many spinoff jobs that these brewers create through their success in local agriculture and the hospitality industry.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** Thank you, Minister, for your response. This is really exciting news for craft brewers across the province and especially in my riding of Oak Ridges–Markham, as we are host to a thriving brewery, the King Brewery in Nobleton, which I'm sure this House will be excited to hear recently won a gold medal in the Kellerbier category and the bronze medal in the Bock, traditional German style, category at the 2013 Canadian Brewing Awards. Ensuring that flagship sectors in Ontario like these continue to see support from our government will only keep our economy diverse while creating jobs for the future.

1130

Mr. Speaker, on the day before Toronto Beer Week kicks off, when many of these craft brewers will have a chance to showcase their fine brews, through you, could the minister update the House on just how big the craft beer industry is in Ontario?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Well, that's a great question, and I thank my colleague for the opportunity to speak to it.

Over the last eight years, the pace of growth in the craft brewing industry has accelerated, with nearly 45% growth in sales; in fact, leading sales of all products in our LCBO stores. Nearly 1,000 people across the province are directly employed by craft brewers. That's 20% of all the people in that sector at over 47 microbreweries around the province. This industry is gaining such momentum that in 2012, Niagara College offered Canada's first brewmaster and brewery operations management program, and everyone in the first graduating class found industry jobs.

Mr. Speaker, this doesn't even begin to tell the story of the spinoff jobs created across a variety of sectors, including agriculture. Ontario craft brewers highlight a real made-in-Ontario success story, something we can all be proud of as we continue on the government's path to creating a fair and prosperous Ontario.

## PROVINCIAL PARKS

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. Minister, the families who live in Rondeau Park, a chartered cottage provincial park since 1894 in my riding of Chatham–Kent–Essex, have been told that they'll have to find a new home in 2017 and tear their cottages down at their own expense.

These are hard-working Ontarians who expect to keep their homes and continue supporting their community while doing so. Instead, they are being threatened with the loss of their unique heritage community because the government has decided the park needs to be returned to nature, with little evidence to back up their claims.

Minister, we need to work together. Will you listen to the families of Rondeau, who have spent generations as stewards of this beautiful park, and either allow them to purchase their property or at least agree to extend their lease agreements?

**Hon. David Oraziatti:** I'm certainly pleased to have the question today. The member from Chatham–Kent–Essex has given me another letter today, which we will be taking a close look at. The member opposite knows full well we've had a number of discussions on the matter and our ministry is very actively engaged on this issue. We want a positive resolution to this.

The member also knows that in 2010 we released a policy to propose extending the leases to 2038. There were some strong polarized views that came into play, and there have been a number of reviews around the ecological integrity and the natural habitat of this park to ensure that that's maintained.

But I want to assure the member opposite that we're committed to finding a positive resolution here. We certainly respect the cultural and historic significance that these individuals and the organizations in the area have with respect to Rondeau and these leases.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** I believe that there is an everyone-wins solution here: Rondeau Park, Ontario Parks, Chatham–Kent, leaseholders, the environment and the economy. Minister, they all win. Families will be able to reinvest in their homes with the confidence of tenure behind them.

You and I have had many discussions, as well as your predecessor, Minister Gravelle. We've discussed options with regard to this. I've also asked the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport to grant the heritage designation that this park and the cottages so rightly deserve. Instead of destroying the local ecosystem with an extensive teardown, the park gets to keep its proud stewards while giving up less than 1% of its area.

Minister, I ask you, will you endorse this crucial project for Rondeau families?

**Hon. David Oraziatti:** Again, I say to the member opposite that we're committed to finding a positive resolution to this. With respect to the designation of the area, as the member also knows, that is a function of the municipalities. But we do have guidelines and standards when it comes to provincial property and provincial parks.

Again, I want to say to the member opposite, we're committed to finding a positive resolution that helps to protect the cultural, historic significance that these residents have enjoyed for many decades and generations, as well as protect the natural biodiversity of this park.

## MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Minister of Long-Term Care and Health. In the budget, the Liberal government claimed that mental health is a top priority, yet it's cutting mental health beds at Providence Care in Kingston and firing 70 nurses, housekeepers and food



service workers who care for vulnerable patients in their time of need. Can the minister please explain to mental health patients and their families in Kingston how cutting beds and services will improve the care they receive?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I assure the member opposite, and I think she knows this, that our government is very strongly committed to providing improved services for Ontarians with mental health challenges.

Part of our commitment to mental health is building up supports in the community. That is where the greatest need is, and when we do that right, when we support people to live independently, we can close beds in institutions where they previously have been residing. We have almost doubled spending for community-based mental health services and we're serving more than 500,000 Ontarians in community mental health and addictions programs every year.

Speaker, we must provide 24-hour care for those who need it, but when people can be supported in the community, that is where we will be supporting them.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, I find it odd that the minister is relying on a more-than-20-year-old study done by the Harris government when it comes to hospital restructuring. I think the people in Kingston deserve much better than information based on studies that were done over two decades ago. The Premier's commitment, however, was to expanding access to mental health services, and that commitment is ringing very, very hollow for the people of Kingston because this government's actions don't back up its words when it comes to the looming cuts at Providence Care in Kingston.

Is cutting mental health care beds and laying off nurses this government's idea of transforming health care in Ontario?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, our commitment to transforming health care is to provide people the care they need where they need it, as close to home as possible. Because of changes in our understanding of mental illness, we are able to care for more people in the community. I do not think people should be in institutions when they can be cared for safely and productively in the community.

I do believe the members opposite believe in community-based mental health programming, and that's exactly what we're doing. When we have successes in the community, it does reduce demand for institutional-based care.

## DEFERRED VOTES

### FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER ACT, 2013

### LOI DE 2013 SUR LE DIRECTEUR DE LA RESPONSABILITÉ FINANCIÈRE

Deferred vote on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 95, An Act to establish a Financial Accountability Officer / Projet de loi 95, Loi créant le poste de directeur de la responsabilité financière.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1138 to 1143.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On September 11, Mr. Milloy moved second reading of Bill 95. All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura  
Armstrong, Teresa J.  
Arnott, Ted  
Bailey, Robert  
Balkissoon, Bas  
Bartolucci, Rick  
Bisson, Gilles  
Bradley, James J.  
Campbell, Sarah  
Cansfield, Donna H.  
Chan, Michael  
Chiarelli, Bob  
Chudleigh, Ted  
Clark, Steve  
Colle, Mike  
Coteau, Michael  
Crack, Grant  
Damerla, Dipika  
Del Duca, Steven  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic  
DiNovo, Cheri  
Duguid, Brad  
Elliott, Christine  
Fedeli, Victor  
Fife, Catherine  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Forster, Cindy  
Fraser, John  
Gerretsen, John  
Gélinas, France

Gravelle, Michael  
Hardeman, Ernie  
Harris, Michael  
Hatfield, Percy  
Holyday, Douglas C.  
Horwath, Andrea  
Hoskins, Eric  
Hudak, Tim  
Hunter, Mitzie  
Jackson, Rod  
Jaczek, Helena  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Jones, Sylvia  
Kwinter, Monte  
Leone, Rob  
MacCharles, Tracy  
MacLaren, Jack  
MacLeod, Lisa  
Mangat, Amrit  
Mantha, Michael  
Marchese, Rosario  
Matthews, Deborah  
Mauro, Bill  
McDonnell, Jim  
McKenna, Jane  
McMeekin, Ted  
McNaughton, Monte  
McNeely, Phil  
Meilleur, Madeleine  
Miller, Paul  
Milligan, Rob E.

Milloy, John  
Moridi, Reza  
Munro, Julia  
Murray, Glen R.  
Naqvi, Yasir  
Natyshak, Taras  
Nicholls, Rick  
O'Toole, John  
Oraziotti, David  
Ouellette, Jerry J.  
Pettapiece, Randy  
Piruzza, Teresa  
Qaadri, Shafiq  
Sandals, Liz  
Sattler, Peggy  
Schein, Jonah  
Sergio, Mario  
Singh, Jagmeet  
Smith, Todd  
Tabuns, Peter  
Taylor, Monique  
Thompson, Lisa M.  
Vanthof, John  
Walker, Bill  
Wilson, Jim  
Wong, Soo  
Wynne, Kathleen O.  
Yakabuski, John  
Yurek, Jeff

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those against, please rise.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 91; the nays are 0.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 5, 2013, the bill is referred to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I will recognize a point of order from the member from Manitoulin.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** It isn't a point of order. I just want to thank all the members who wore pink today in support of the campaign standing up against bullying today. I want to thank all the members that took the initiative of doing so.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It's not a point of order.

Since there are no further deferred votes, this House stands recessed until 1 p.m.

*The House recessed from 1147 to 1300.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** It's a pleasure for me to rise and recognize my dear friend Asif Khan, who is visiting us here and sitting in the members' gallery.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### WES FOR YOUTH ONLINE

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to tell you about a new initiative for youth in my riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound and the riding of my colleague and MPP for Huron–Bruce, Lisa Thompson. Wesforyouthonline.ca is Internet-based counselling for youth, accessible at all times and ready to listen when our youth are ready to talk about their tough personal challenges.

Cyber-counselling is a novel concept, and I think it's a valuable one, as it will offer a counselling medium familiar to today's tech-savvy teens. I'm sure all of you will agree that today's generation is very comfortable communicating and connecting with others through the Internet, be it social media, networking or, in this case, seeking therapy through wesforyouthonline.ca.

Lisa and I would like to also take a moment to recognize and sincerely commend the brave and compassionate people behind this great project: Yolanda and Jamie Cameron of Walkerton. Losing a child to suicide is a difficult and painful experience that is every parent's worst conceivable nightmare. In 2011, the Camerons realized such a shattering tragedy when their son Wes took his own life.

And so this project was born out of a memorial fund that Yolanda and Jamie set up in Wes's memory. They want to use the money to help all children who may be suffering from bouts of self-doubt, who are feeling alone and struggling with problems important to them and feel unable to reach out to teachers, coaches, peers, friends, parents or siblings for help. The online counselling service will ensure that our youth keep talking about their problems and that there's always somebody on the other end of the line, be it the Internet or telephone, to hear them out.

Wesforyouthonline.ca is partnering with www.therapy-online.ca, which has been offering Internet-based counselling since 1994. They have also partnered with the Canadian Mental Health Association and Community Foundation Grey Bruce.

Wesforyouthonline.ca has two experienced counselors who have been specially trained in cyber-counselling through courses offered by the University of Toronto. Funding the service will require corporate and private donations and sponsorships to keep the programs running.

Lisa and I encourage all members to find a way to support the website and help to raise awareness and promote emotional wellness.

## TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Yesterday, my office had the occasion to visit one of the world's biggest and best film festivals, the Toronto International Film Festival, which the whole world knows about.

TIFF has an industry side which is overshadowed by the stars and red carpets and the amazing films that make TIFF so wonderful. But the industry side of the festival is where movies of the future and stars-to-be are made.

Contrary to popular belief, arts and entertainment is a huge sector of Ontario's economy. TIFF is obviously a gem for Ontario and attracts a great deal of attention; movie and television production is well known too—but it's not as well known that film and television production in this province brought in over \$1 billion to Ontario's economy in each of the last two years.

Not only that, but the arts economy is spread right across this province, too. In fact, in my riding of Kitchener–Waterloo, home to so much of Ontario's research and innovation, Christie Digital develops, markets and manufactures some of the world's most advanced digital projectors.

Their cutting-edge projectors are used at more than 100,000 locations—in fact, many of you actually have these products in your own homes and your own ridings—and are used on over 38,000 screens worldwide featuring Christie Digital cinema projectors, including at the Toronto International Film Festival. Christie Digital's 4K projectors are showcasing some of the biggest film premieres in the world.

We're so proud of Christie Digital. We're so proud to be part of the Toronto International Film Festival. Arts, culture and the economy: They are all connected and to be celebrated in the province of Ontario.

## COPTIC COMMUNITY

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** It is with great pleasure that I extend my warmest wishes to the members of the Coptic community as they celebrate their new year.

In the Coptic Orthodox Church, September 11 is the feast of Nayrouz, when martyrs and confessors are commemorated. This day is also the start of the Coptic new year and the first month of the Coptic calendar.

The Coptic calendar itself predates the birth of Christ by at least three millennia. During the time of the pharaohs, the appearance of Sothis in the Egyptian sky signalled the rise of the Nile and the start of the new planting season. Mid-September is usually when the waters of the Nile River rise, and prayers are lifted to God for the rising of the waters of the rivers for irrigation and to ask for his blessings at the beginning, or crown, of the Coptic calendar year.

Apart from the church's celebration, the new year is celebrated by eating red dates, which are now in season. The red of the dates symbolizes the martyrs' blood that they were willing to shed for Christ, and the white date



heart serves as a reminder of the martyrs' pure hearts. So as you celebrate with family and friends, may the new year mark a new beginning of peace and good fortune for the entire Coptic community.

### NEW HAMBURG FALL FAIR

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Tonight kicks off the 159th anniversary of the New Hamburg Fall Fair. As part of our heritage, it's important that we take the time to celebrate the local arts and culture of our community.

Since 1854, neighbours, families and friends have been coming together to celebrate these things and learn more about our local agriculture and food. At the fair, there will be cattle and horse shows, a draught horse pull, horse jumping and wagon rides to celebrate this year's theme: horses. In the arena, they will host the fair Ambassador Competition, an annual spelling bee, a baby show and a presentation by the local 4-H club. I wish the best of luck to all those participating in these events.

As a child, my favourite part of the fair, of course, was the frog jump. That's why I'm excited to host a frog jump competition at this year's New Hamburg Fall Fair on Saturday afternoon. I encourage children 13 and younger to join in the fun. For more information, visit my website, MichaelHarrisMPP.ca.

Of course, events like this could not happen without the countless hours given by the organizers, volunteers and contest participants. So I'd like to thank all of them for their hard work. I encourage the folks from Wilmot township, Waterloo region and those listening to participate in the many activities the fair has to offer this coming weekend. Thank you, and hope to see you at the fair.

### FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES NIAGARA

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** I rise to address the ongoing funding issues with regard to children's protection services in this province. FACS of Niagara has recently announced the closure of the Regional Adolescent Centre in Welland, after operating for nearly 40 years. The closure will affect up to 40 full- and part-time employees and will see an end to this specialized care for the 20 youth who call the centre home.

While FACS maintains that no youth will go without appropriate services, the fact remains that the closure decision was made without a clear plan on how or where these youth will receive adequate care. Purely a fiscal decision, the centre is closing because of the widening gap between funding and service cuts. After years of unsustainable funding decreases, FACS received approximately \$4 million from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services last year. But with limitations on the new funding model, they are falling further and further behind, anticipating a \$2-million deficit this year.

To add even more fuel to the fire, the ministry has recently mandated that CASs are required to submit balanced budgets, which will have a direct impact on core

services, severely destabilizing child protection services and presenting a significant adjustment to the workforce.

It's time that the Minister of Children and Youth Services provided stable and sustainable funding options to FACS to avoid more cuts to vital services like the Regional Adolescent Centre in Welland.

### TANYA KHAN

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** Speaker, often when we bring forward member statements here in this House, we highlight happy moments. Unfortunately, today I do rise to mark a far more sombre event.

Having said that, it remains an honour for me to rise and pay tribute to Tanya Khan, an inspiring woman: a wife, a mother, a daughter, a sister and a friend; an exemplary individual who had an incredible impact on everyone who met her and who left us tragically and far too soon.

Tanya was a popular teacher in my community who had a richly deserved loyal following among the students that she taught both at Kleinburg Public School and Louis-Honoré Fréchette elementary school. She was a noteworthy and widely recognized advocate and champion for diversity and interfaith dialogue, with an unparalleled zeal for life.

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Her love and respect for others was genuine, and many were touched by her warmth and compassion. In fact, thousands came to pay their respects upon her passing, which is additional proof of the indelible mark she left on our community. Her influence was, and remains, considerable.

Her eloquent legacy will live on in the fond memories that her husband, Asif, and their daughters, Alia, Safiya and Nadya, will forever hold dear.

Tanya Khan, a truly remarkable, one-of-a-kind individual, will never, ever be forgotten.

### CULTURAL DIVERSITY

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Speaker, with your permission, I have an Ode to Freedom and Diversity.

In La Belle Province, they may dare

To tell you what you may not wear,

What symbols you may never bear

or what you can't put on your hair.

Muslims, Christians, Jews, beware!

You give the separatists quite a scare.

Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs, take care!

You are not welcome over there.

Ontario, thank God, need not despair  
of such hateful laws or divisive hot air.

We are free in thoughts, free in prayers,

Free in expression and all private affairs.

We value our rights over laws doctrinaire

Our diversity gives us such richness and flair.

When it comes to our faith, we say "laissez-faire"  
and follow the words of the wise man Voltaire.

Voltaire said once that, "Man is free the moment that he wants to be."

In Ontario I'm glad to see

We don't forfeit rights so easily.

PC, Liberal and NDP,

I commend all three parties here before me

We may fight over details, but never shall we court voters that hate those who dress differently.

So say what you want, say it with ease

in English, Arabic, Greek or Chinese

Show us your faith, it's not a disease,

And wear whatever you damn well please.

I'd like to commend Monte Kwinter for bringing forward his motion. I look forward to its unanimous passing at our earliest opportunity.

### YOM KIPPUR

**Mr. Monte Kwinter:** This weekend, Jews around the world will observe Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, the most solemn of Jewish religious holidays. Yom Kippur is observed on the 10th day of the lunar month of Tishrei, and it is when Jews seek to atone for their sins and achieve reconciliation with God.

Yom Kippur concluded the 10 days of repentance that begin with Rosh Hashanah, New Year's Day, on the first day of Tishrei. It is on Yom Kippur that solemnity and cessation of work are most complete.

The purpose of Yom Kippur is to effect individual and collective purification by the practice of forgiveness of the sins of others and by sincere repentance for one's own sins against God.

Yom Kippur is marked by abstention from food and drink. Jewish congregations spend the eve of Yom Kippur and the entire day in prayer and meditation. On the eve of Yom Kippur, the Kol Nidre, famous for its beautiful melody, is recited. Friends also ask for and accept forgiveness from one another for past offences on the evening before Yom Kippur.

The services on Yom Kippur itself last continuously from morning to evening and include readings from the Torah.

Yizkor, which are memorial prayers for the recently deceased, are also recited. The service concludes with the Ne'ilah, the closing prayers.

Yom Kippur comes to an end with the recitation of Shema Yisrael and the blowing of the ritual ram's horn, known as the shofar, which marks the conclusion of the fast.

L'Shana Tova to all.

### McNAUGHTON'S

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** It's a pleasure to rise to recognize the 65th anniversary of our family business, McNaughton's in Newbury.

The store was first opened in 1948, selling general hardware and farm supplies, by my grandfather Jack

McNaughton, and has been a story of growth and change ever since that time.

In 1980, the store joined Home Hardware. In 1988, my parents, Gary and Susan McNaughton, purchased the family business. At this time, there were three employees but, soon, running the store became a family operation as my brother, Mike, my sister, Nicole, and I all started helping and working around the store.

In 1995, we added a RadioShack franchise, and, in 1997, a lumber supply company. In 2000, we added an M&M Meat Shops; in 2004, an LCBO agency store; and in 2010, a Rogers store.

Not only does 2013 mark the 65th anniversary of our family store, but it also marks the 50th anniversary of my father and my mentor, Gary McNaughton, buying his first business.

Speaker, for the past 65 years, my family has been proud to serve our community and serve our customers at McNaughton's in Newbury, and I would like to congratulate the entire team of 60 people who work at the store, our suppliers and our customers.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

Reports by committees?

It's now time for introduction of bills. The member for Etobicoke south.

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** Etobicoke North, Speaker, but we hope to have south at some point, too.

I move second reading of Bill 96, Loi visant à sensibiliser le public au radon, à prévoir la création du Registre des concentrations de radon en Ontario et à réduire la concentration de ce gaz dans les logements et les lieux de travail.

Bill 96, An Act to raise awareness about—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I am sorry for interrupting, but I think you're not doing the introduction of a bill; you're doing a second reading introduction. Am I correct in that assumption?

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** Thank you, Speaker. I move second reading of the bill.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We're not at that point right now. You'll have to do that in private members' time.

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

#### TERRY FOX DAY ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 SUR LA JOURNÉE

#### TERRY FOX

Mr. Ouellette moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 99, An Act to proclaim Terry Fox Day / Projet de loi 99, Loi proclamant la journée Terry Fox.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement, please.

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** Terry Fox ran 40 kilometres every day for 143 days before the disease forced him to stop. He inspired many Canadians to carry on where he left off. Each Sunday, each year in September, participants walk, run, jog or bicycle in memory of Terry Fox and his historic Marathon of Hope. The bill proclaims the Sunday of the Terry Fox Run in September of each year as Terry Fox Day.

Essentially, Mr. Speaker, we as a society may build monuments or name sections of road. However, unless you actually drive that section of highway, one never knows the distance that is truly travelled.

## MOTIONS

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Milloy is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

The government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, I move that notwithstanding standing order 98(g), notice for ballot item 37 be waived.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Milloy moves that notwithstanding standing order 98(g), notice for ballot item 37 be waived.

Do we agree? Agreed. Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I'm delighted today to rise to welcome visitors from around the world who are enjoying all that our province has to offer while they are here for the Toronto International Film Festival.

Speaker, our government is proud to support the Toronto International Film Festival, a marquee event that celebrates the strength and success of Ontario's film sector. Attracting thousands of movie-goers, film industry representatives, filmmakers, actors and international media, TIFF truly shines a bright spot on our province while placing us on the map as a premier cultural capital. TIFF has grown to become one of the top film festivals in the world, while at the same time, Ontario has emerged as one of the largest film and television production centres in North America.

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Mr. Speaker, Ontario is proud to roll out the red carpet and welcome the world, but we are also proud to applaud and support our talented industry. The province has invested in a number of this year's TIFF selections, including *The Art of the Steal*, *Enemy* and *The Husband*, all of which were filmed in Ontario. And when it comes to film distribution, Entertainment One, a company based in Toronto, has 29 films in this year's festival.

This year our government will further support the industry with cultural media tax credits, the lion's share of which goes to the films, television and digital industries. Since 2003, we have made other strategic investments in the industry. For example, we have supported the Toronto International Film Festival with more than \$62 million, including \$35 million for the Bell Lightbox.

Our government also recognizes that in a constantly evolving industry, we must make sure that Ontarians have the skills to succeed and to help us solidify our international reputation as a leader in the screen-based and digital entertainment sector. Speaker, what I am referring to is access to the necessary education, experience and expertise. It's crucial and critical to Ontario's continued success in this field.

This is why we are proud to partner with the Canadian Film Centre, a centre which plays an instrumental role in preparing our next generation of cultural pioneers, trailblazers and visionaries. This weekend, I was pleased to affirm our 2013-14 budget commitment when I announced that we are investing \$9 million over three years to help expand the Canadian Film Centre's acclaimed training programs and further develop Ontario's screen-based and digital entertainment markets. This provincial support builds on the \$9-million investment in the film centre that we announced in 2010.

Mr. Speaker, helping make Ontario's film and television sector more competitive is part of our government's plan to create jobs and build a fair and prosperous society, and our investments are paying off. Over the past five years, economic activity in the film and television sector has nearly doubled. Last year, the sector achieved its strongest results ever, contributing \$1.28 billion to the province's GDP, employing close to 29,000 Ontarians.

I'm proud to welcome our many visitors to TIFF. I'm proud that our government has played an important role in ensuring that TIFF is a success. I'm proud of our government's part in supporting and developing the screen-based industry as a viable and growing sector of Ontario's economy.

Most of all, however, Speaker, I'm proud of the thousands of men and women who work in these industries and whose talent, skills and expertise shine not only during TIFF but throughout the year. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the thousands of TIFF organizers and volunteers for their tireless efforts to make the festival such a great success year after year.

Speaker, members of the House, don't take my word for it. Please go see one of the several hundreds of films yourself and please enjoy the festival.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is now time for responses.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Being a cultural thing, I should have an ode, but I didn't have time to write one.

It's a pleasure to rise in the House this afternoon and respond to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport and highlight the many great things happening at the Toronto International Film Festival. I would say that the Toronto International Film Festival is a phenomenal event. It's the second-largest film festival in the world. You know, it's not always good to be second, especially if you're in politics, but to be second to the Cannes film festival—which has been around for a thousand years, I'm sure—is a very, very good thing.

TIFF began in 1976 as a Festival of Festivals, collecting the best films from other film festivals around the world and showing them to eager audiences in Toronto. That first year, 35,000 enthusiasts watched 127 films from 30 countries. By 2012, those numbers had grown to feature 372 movies from 72 different countries, enjoyed by over 400,000 people, all visiting Toronto—no wonder it has been hard to get a hotel room in this city during the last two weeks.

The Festival of Festivals was renamed the Toronto International Film Festival in 1995 and has introduced many of the world's greatest film artists to Toronto audiences. Over the past few years, many great accomplishments have been realized at TIFF, including the opening of the new home called the TIFF Bell Lightbox. That facility has enabled TIFF to expand to truly become a creative global leader and one of the world's premier organizations in the discovery and understanding of film. The TIFF Bell Lightbox features five cinemas, two restaurants, major exhibits and learning entertainment facilities. As a result, TIFF has become one of the most important respected film institutes in the world.

Today is day 8 of this film festival, and what an outstanding festival it has been so far. Many fantastic world premiere movie screenings such as *Gravity*, *August: Osage County* and *Devil's Knot* have already awed thousands of people. While a number of outstanding films have already debuted, the festival is far from over.

As a strong supporter of the Canadian film industry, I'd like to take a moment to pay tribute to the strong Canadian presence at this year's festival. Several Canadian filmmakers, including Denis Villeneuve, Jennifer Baichwal, Michael Dowse, Robert Lepage and Xavier Dolan are among those celebrated for their work, which includes high-profile talent like Harry Potter star Daniel Radcliffe. Also, director Atom Egoyan directed *Devil's Knot*, which has been acclaimed as one of the leading films of this year's festival. I saw it Sunday night, and it is an excellent movie.

On behalf of the entire PC caucus, I'd like to thank the many organizers, sponsors and friends of the festival whose continuous hard work and dedication make TIFF a reality. When you go to TIFF, there are people wearing orange shirts with "Volunteer" splashed across, and

anything you want to know: where you have to go, how to get in, where to get a ticket, where to find this or that or other things—these volunteers have been extremely well trained, and they're very, very helpful. It's not just a volunteer wearing a T-shirt; they have really done a terrific job in training and organizing their volunteers.

Over the remaining four days, I sincerely encourage all members of this House to take in all that the Toronto International Film Festival has to offer.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I'm particularly pleased to speak about the Toronto International Film Festival and Ontario's film industry, when we are just past the halfway point of this year's TIFF.

Over the past few years, my wife, Carole, and I have attended TIFF screenings and begun a greater appreciation of good films. The magic of TIFF is that the films screened are not necessarily destined to the big chains but are created to tell compelling stories and to awaken our awareness.

Films at TIFF are from many different countries and are often co-operative efforts by filmmakers and producers from two or more countries. Not every film grabs our attention, but they do for many others who are ardent filmgoers. The lineups of film buffs expectant at what depths certain writers, directors and actors will take themselves to bring meaningful issues to their audiences is a visual reminder of the impact that TIFF has on our society and a reminder that Toronto's economy receives a significant economic boon because of TIFF: not only the venues at which films are screened, but the local restaurants, mobile food vendors, hotels, parking lots and many other stores and businesses. The media who come to Toronto vying for the best close-up, the best scoop and the exclusive interview all provide advertising for this city, this province and this country—advertising that would be a prohibitive cost for most of our budgets.

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The government states that it has invested \$4.8 billion in the whole province's film, entertainment and cultural industries and that \$62 million of this is to TIFF and the TIFF Bell Lightbox. Laudable, but is it enough? Is taxpayers' money supporting enough cultural endeavours throughout the entire province?

Hamilton, where I'm from, has a strong film industry with many unique locations, everything from long-term filming to commercial and advertising shoots. Ontario has many, many breathtaking places unique from any other country and any other province or any other state that would work well in many of the films. But are we working hard enough to promote these regional treasures, to pump local entertainment and cultural industries? I'm not sure. I would like to hear from the minister that even more is being done to spread the work and diversify additional cultural and entertainment money throughout the whole province.

I'm happy that we support TIFF, along with many private sector sponsors, and I expect that the province provides significant support to Hot Docs and other similar film festivals in Toronto. But again, let's ensure



that more money is provided and additional efforts are made to support film, live theatre, TV series and more throughout our entire province.

Speaker, on behalf of my colleagues, I want to extend a sincere thanks to those hard-working people who make sure these various cultural events happen. Particularly, I want to thank all the volunteers, without whom most of these events would not function well at all.

I am actually thrilled that we have such a wonderful festival in Toronto and I'm sure that many of our other communities would love to be hosts to other events that would certainly expose us to many different—because we have a very diversified population, we have diversified cultures. We have over 200 cultures in this province that would love to show their history and their culture to the world. Hopefully, the minister and his ministry will put more money into cultural, film and other media events throughout the entire province, because we have a lot out there that are cherished, unknown treasures that we want to share with the world.

## PETITIONS

### HOSPITAL PARKING FEES

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'm pleased to have a role here today.

"Whereas the United Senior Citizens of Ontario has expressed its concerns over the high costs of parking at hospitals in Ontario on behalf of its more than 300,000 members; and

"Whereas thousands of Ontario seniors find it difficult to live on their fixed income and cannot afford these extra hospital parking fees added to their daily living costs; and

"Whereas the Canadian Medical Association Journal has said in an editorial that parking fees are a barrier to health care and add additional stress to patients who have enough to deal with;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Ontario's members of provincial Parliament and the Kathleen Wynne government take action to abolish parking fees for all seniors when visiting hospitals."

I'm pleased to sign and support this petition and present to Pratah, one of the pages here.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Scarborough—from Mississauga East—Cooksville.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Mississauga—Streetsville.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Streetsville.

### FAMILY SAFETY

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Thank you very much, Speaker. I'm just trying to make sure that we know who's who.

I have a petition addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly about the Safer Families Program in Peel region. It reads as follows:

"Whereas the Safer Families Program is a successful partnership of Catholic Family Services Peel-Dufferin, Family Services of Peel and the Peel Children's Aid Society (CAS), receives year-to-year funding from the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services, and is a critical component of social services to families within the Peel community; and

"Whereas the intervention model for Safer Families currently operates with no waiting lists, an important consideration for families experiencing domestic violence and child protection concerns, as they require immediate access to service; and

"Whereas the Safer Families Program is aligned with Ontario's child poverty agenda, is committed to preventing violence against women, and contributes to community capacity building to support child welfare delivery; and

"Whereas currently, Safer Families serves 14% of all domestic violence cases referred to Peel Children's Aid Society and has the ability to double the number of cases it handles;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario adjust its funding to supply ongoing core funding rather than year-to-year funding, and realign funding to double the percentage of cases referred by the Peel Children's Aid Society and served by the Safer Families Program."

Speaker, I completely agree with this petition. I am pleased to sign it and to ask page Erica to carry it for me.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. I apologize to the member from Mississauga—Cooksville.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Streetsville.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's what I said.

### LYME DISEASE

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I want to thank Cathie Kelso from Spencerville, who gave me this petition after a recent Lyme disease information and awareness session in Roebuck.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the tick-borne illness known as chronic Lyme disease, which mimics many catastrophic illnesses such as multiple sclerosis, Crohn's, Alzheimer's, arthritic diabetes, depression, chronic fatigue and fibromyalgia, is increasingly endemic in Canada, but scientifically validated diagnostic tests and treatment choices are currently not available in Ontario, forcing patients to seek these in the USA and Europe;

"Whereas the Canadian Medical Association informed the public, governments and the medical profession in the May 30, 2000, edition of its professional journal that Lyme disease is endemic throughout Canada, particularly in southern Ontario; and

"Whereas the Ontario public health system and the Ontario Health Insurance Plan currently do not fund those specific tests that accurately serve the process for establishing a clinical diagnosis, but only recognize

testing procedures known in the medical literature to provide false negatives 45% to 95% of the time;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to request the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to direct the Ontario public health system and OHIP to include all currently available and scientifically verified tests for acute and chronic Lyme diagnosis, to do everything necessary to create public awareness of Lyme disease in Ontario, and to have internationally developed diagnostic and successful treatment protocols available to patients and physicians."

I'm pleased to affix my signature and send the petition to the table with our fabulous page from Leeds-Grenville, Peyton.

### LONG-TERM CARE

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition from the people of Nickel Belt, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas there are a growing number of reported cases of abuse, neglect and substandard care for our seniors in long-term-care homes; and

"Whereas people with complaints have limited options, and frequently don't complain because they fear repercussions, which suggests too many seniors are being left in vulnerable situations without independent oversight; and

"Whereas Ontario is one of only two provinces in Canada where the Ombudsman does not have independent oversight of long-term-care homes. We need accountability, transparency and consistency in our long-term-care home system";

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario "to expand the Ombudsman's mandate to include Ontario's long-term-care homes in order to protect our most vulnerable seniors."

I agree with this petition, and will affix my name to it and ask page Kieva to bring it to the Clerk.

### FAMILY CAREGIVER LEAVE

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly:

"Whereas the people of Ontario deserve to be able to look after their sick or injured family members without fearing that they will lose their jobs at such a vulnerable time;

"Whereas the people of Ontario deserve to be able to spend time looking for a child that has disappeared, or take time off to grieve the death of a child that was murdered without fearing that they will lose their jobs;

"Whereas the federal government has recently extended similar leaves and economic supports to federal employees;

"Whereas the government of Ontario, and the Premier of Ontario, support Ontario families and wish to foster mental and physical well-being by allowing those closest to sick or injured family members the time to provide support free of work-related concerns;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario pass and enact, during spring of 2013, Bill 21, the Leaves to Help Families Act."

I fully support it. I'll give it to page Efua.

### TAXATION

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I have a petition which reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the cost of living in northwestern Ontario is significantly higher than other regions of the province due to the high cost of necessities such as hydro, home heating fuel, gasoline and auto insurance; and

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"Whereas an increase in the price of any of these essential goods will make it even more difficult for people living in northwestern Ontario to pay their bills and put food on the table;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To reject any proposed increase to the harmonized sales tax, gas tax or any other fees or taxes in the northwest; and instead investigate other means such as increasing corporate tax compliance or eliminating corporate tax loopholes in order to fund transit in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area."

I fully support this, will affix my signature and give it to page James to deliver to the table.

### PROTECTION OF RESOURCES

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I've got a petition entitled "Protect Our Waterfalls." It's to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

"Whereas Ontario waterfalls and natural resources are being hoarded by private developers for energy projects worth billions; and

"Whereas crown land is too valuable to be awarded to private individuals or corporations for energy undertakings; and

"Whereas renewable energy alternatives must be considered with a view to investing the profits for the betterment of the community and for the betterment of Ontario, not the enrichment of private investors; and

"Whereas the Ontario government must facilitate a better process to enable communities to respectfully consider available options for local energy opportunities;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario amend the Public Lands Act to prohibit the disposition of crown land for private energy projects."

I'll forward this to the table with page Sean.



## PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I want to thank the many seniors from Leeds–Grenville who have forwarded me these petitions over the summer.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care plans to eliminate OHIP-funded physiotherapy services currently provided to seniors in retirement homes—and changing the current provider of the service as of August 1st, 2013; and

“Whereas last year the government spent \$110 million on physiotherapy for seniors in long-term care, but with the proposed changes this will decrease to \$58.5 million; and

“Whereas, instead of the 100 to 150 visits per year a senior may receive now from their dedicated, on-site OHIP physiotherapy staff, the change would mean a CCAC therapist would provide only five to 10 visits on-site only to seniors who are bedridden or have an acute injury; and

“Whereas this change not only reduces the funding available, but also moves funds from the lowest-cost provider (OHIP physiotherapy providers at \$12.20 per treatment) to the highest-cost provider (CCAC at \$120 per treatment); and

“Whereas these services are proven to help seniors improve in their activities of daily living, mobility, pain and fall risks;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To review and reverse the decision to eliminate OHIP physiotherapy services to seniors in retirement homes and continue with the provision of at least 100 treatments per year with a mechanism to access an additional 50 treatments, if medically necessary, with the current low-cost OHIP physiotherapy providers.”

I’ve had the petition enacted by the table and will send it with the page.

## REPLACEMENT WORKERS

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have a petition that was collected during our Labour Day celebrations in Sudbury. It reads as follows:

“Whereas strikes and lockouts are rare: on average, 97% of collective agreements are negotiated without work disruption; and

“Whereas anti-temporary replacement workers laws have existed in Quebec since 1978; in British Columbia since 1993; and successive governments in those two provinces have never repealed those laws; and

“Whereas anti-temporary replacement workers legislation has reduced the length and divisiveness of labour disputes; and

“Whereas the use of temporary replacement workers during a strike or lockout is damaging to the social fabric of a community in the short and the long term as well as the well-being of its residents;”

They “petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to enact legislation banning the use of temporary replacement workers during a strike or lockout.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask page Katherine to bring it to the Clerk.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Scarborough residents north of Ontario Highway 401 and east of Don Mills are without a rapid transit option; and

“Whereas a strong transit system is critical for increasing economic development and tackling income disparity; and

“Whereas this geographical area continues to grow and the demand for strong rapid transit continues to increase; and

“Whereas Sheppard Avenue is a major artery for automobile traffic for commuters travelling from suburbs to downtown Toronto, and travelling from suburb to suburb; and

“Whereas ground-level rapid transit would increase traffic, restrict lanes for automobiles, and add further risk for pedestrians and commuters at dangerous intersections along Sheppard Avenue; and

“Whereas demands for underground rapid transit along Sheppard Avenue have been part of public discourse for over 50 years; and

“Whereas the province of Ontario previously approved a plan from the city of Toronto to extend the Sheppard subway line from Downsview to Scarborough Centre; and

“Whereas an extension to the Sheppard subway line will require contributions and co-operation from the city of Toronto, the province of Ontario and the government of Canada;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To support the extension of the Sheppard subway line east to Scarborough Centre; and

“To call upon all levels of government to contribute multi-year funding for the construction and operation of an extension to the Sheppard subway line.”

I fully support the petition, and I will give it to page Aly Muhammad.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further petitions? The member for Durham.

## PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

**Mr. John O’Toole:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I hope to be the last one today.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care plans to eliminate OHIP-funded physiotherapy services currently provided to seniors in retirement homes—and

changing the current provider of the service as of August 1st, 2013; and

"Whereas last year the government spent \$110 million on physiotherapy for seniors in long-term care, but with the proposed changes this will decrease to \$58.5 million; and

"Whereas, instead of the 100 to 150 visits per year a senior may receive now from their dedicated, on-site OHIP physiotherapy staff, the change would mean a CCAC therapist would provide only five to 10 visits on-site only to seniors who are bedridden or have an acute injury; and

"Whereas this change not only reduces the funding available, but also moves funds from the lowest-cost provider (OHIP physiotherapy providers at \$12.20 per treatment) to the highest-cost provider (CCAC at \$120 per treatment); and

"Whereas these services are proven to help seniors improve in their activities of daily living, mobility, pain and fall risks;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To review and reverse the decision to eliminate OHIP physiotherapy services to seniors in retirement homes and continue with the provision of at least 100 treatments per year with a mechanism to access an additional 50 treatments, if medically necessary, with the current low-cost OHIP physiotherapy providers."

I'm pleased to provide this, sign it and give it to Ian, one of the pages.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. The time for petitions has expired.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

### RADON AWARENESS AND PREVENTION ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 SUR LA SENSIBILISATION AU RADON ET LA PROTECTION CONTRE L'INFILTRATION DE CE GAZ

Mr. Qaadri moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 96, An Act to raise awareness about radon, provide for the Ontario Radon Registry and reduce radon levels in dwellings and workplaces / Projet de loi 96, Loi visant à sensibiliser le public au radon, à prévoir la création du Registre des concentrations de radon en Ontario et à réduire la concentration de ce gaz dans les logements et les lieux de travail.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** I appreciate this time allotted to me to raise a very important issue that I think has deep public health implications going forward. I would like to

thank my colleagues, not only MPP Reza Moridi of Richmond Hill, Minister of Research and Innovation, for originally fathering this particular bill, but also a subset of our health care caucus, the honourable Soo Wong, Scarborough-Agincourt, a registered nurse, and the honourable Dr. Helena Jaczek, Oak Ridges-Markham, one of my physician colleagues in the caucus, who will also be speaking to this bill.

### 1350

At the outset, I think we need a quick orientation—I apologize if the physics may get into some elevated science talk. There is a famous element, maybe a dangerous and possibly even somewhat evil element out there called uranium-238. Of course, many of us will be familiar with this particular element, as it was originally what was used, in a highly enriched manner, to create the atomic bomb—nuclear bombs, both strategic and tactical. The issue is that this is a very prevalent element throughout the world and in our soil, certainly throughout Canada, North America and essentially anywhere you look.

It's a very heavy element, which means it's sort of like a balloon at the microscopic level and has lots of little particles inside. These, of course, are known as protons and neutrons. By the way, there are 92 protons and 146 neutrons. They don't all want to stay in there, and they leak, and that, of course, is the issue today. Because when they do leak, they create what are called daughter products or progeny. Essentially, they have little babies that populate our homes, our air, whether it's this air I'm breathing in Parliament or particularly in enclosed spaces.

This, of course, is the health implication for Ontarians: in attics, in basements, in crawl spaces and even more so when you go deeper into the earth, whether it's mines, particularly uranium mines, but many, many other kinds of mine situations. That's when this leaked by-product of this evil element, uranium, can accrue in such a concentration that it leads to a real impact and, unfortunately, negative health effects for Ontarians.

I would also, of course, as I'm speaking, acknowledge the presence of the honourable Steve Mahoney, who is the head of the Radiation Safety Institute of Canada, as well as my colleagues from the Canadian cancer institute, who are here to lend both material and moral support for this particular bill.

What actually is going on? The radon by-products that eventually come from this ever-present uranium—by the way, just to mention, you can't actually wait for this stuff to go away, because you'll be pleased to know the half-life of uranium—half of it will live on for more than 4.5 billion years, which likely exceeds the mandate of even the most popular government. In any case, this stuff is not going anywhere. If it has an enclosed space—as I said, attics, basements and so on; by the way, buildings that have very poor ventilation, which is maybe half the buildings in the country—that is when the products of this gas, actually parts of them, become solid particles and basically fly around on the dust we inhale and are



inhaled and go into the lungs. That, of course, is unfortunately the cause of about 15% or maybe 20% or so of the lung cancers in Canada. About 80% of the lung cancers in Canada are of course caused primarily by smoking, but 15% to 20% or so are actually caused by inhaled, stale-air, radon gas particles. That's a major deal if you think about it.

By the way, we know this because unfortunately we're seeing more and more folks who don't actually smoke but yet are coming to our medical attention because of lung cancer. There are, of course, many other conditions or triggers of lung cancer. It's not only smoking and radon gas. It's usually a menu of choice items that are all selected; for example, genetic predisposition, family history and so on. But when you align all these various negative factors together, that is one issue that unfortunately is becoming more and more prevalent. I have to say that with this particular bill, Ontario has the opportunity of joining many other jurisdictions across the world, be it the United States or the United Kingdom, by the way, that are much further along in institutionalizing, formalizing and codifying the monitoring, regulation and remediation of airspaces that have excess radon gas.

As I was saying, a little about the history: Uranium-238 is found essentially everywhere—soil, rock, water. It's in the air in this particular building. It's underneath us. Of course, that has deep implications for our built environment, which is becoming more and more common. As I mentioned earlier, when radon gas is released—it's released first of all into the atmosphere, and more or less dissipates. But when it essentially leaks into or is caught or trapped in enclosed environments, and all of our homes and work environments and so on have these types of issues—that is when the concentrations of those decay particles, those progeny or fissionable particles, actually collect on microscopic pieces of dust. I could give you the micron measurement, but I'll spare you. But that's the stuff that we inhale, and over time it can actually lead to real cancer DNA effects within our own cells.

We know this particularly because, as I was mentioning, if you need a really enclosed space, talk to miners. There are studies that show, unfortunately, thousands of folks in various—for example, uranium mines in Elliot Lake, 220 documented deaths and up to 400 estimated lung cancer deaths from the Elliot Lake uranium mine alone, a single mine. It's been on the watch list, radon gas, and its health effects, even from 1974. The Ontario Royal Commission on the Health and Safety of Workers in Mines issued warnings, but I think there's been a lag for us to actually institutionalize these types of issues.

I will give you, for example—I know we're not allowed to use props, and far be it from me to ever use a prop in this chamber, but this actually is a radon measurement kit. Basically, it's placed within a basement or an enclosed space, usually the lowest space in the home, because I guess that's where the air is going to be heaviest and sink, and it's left for a certain period of

time. It's a long-term measurement. It's not like, for example, a carbon monoxide or smoke alarm. It doesn't go off instantaneously. But you leave it and it allows the radon to collect. It's sent away to a third-party laboratory and then a report is generated.

Of course, there's lots of numbers attached to the radon radiation reading. For example, 200 is a kind of—again, I'll spare you the units because that gets into high-level physics, but in any case, if the reading is 200 or above, that is considered potentially dangerous and needs to actually be, as we say, remediated or addressed, dealt with. Situations in which people are breathing that material on an ongoing basis expose them to true radiation-induced DNA damage, and as I'm sure all of you will appreciate, that can have deep long-term health effects. As I said earlier, folks from the Radiation Safety Institute as well as the Canadian Cancer Society are very much here to support us in that.

So, for example, about 2,000 lung cancer deaths occur because of radon itself in Canada, with 40% of those, about 800 in terms of number, dying in Ontario, so 800 Ontarians dying because of radon, often many of them non-smokers who unfortunately end up developing lung cancer.

Why is this important? Can't we train a dog or buy some monitor at Canadian Tire or put some little acid paper out and see if it turns blue? No. This is a colourless, tasteless, odorless gas. It has effects but it is part of the background radiation. What I was startled to realize was that despite cosmic radiation, despite all the different things you might think in terms of radiation that's coming your way because of either chemicals in the environment or substances or even, for example, TV screens, whatever energy source that you're near, unfortunately, the most background radiation that you will be exposed to is actually from radon gas.

So this is not an obscure thing. It's not a made-up thing. It's not an environmental tree-hugging thing. It is something that is real. It's causing illness. It's widespread. Everyone is exposed to enclosed airspaces, whether it's in the home setting or the work environment. I think as we are learning more and more about these DNA damage effects, that's why the call is going out. Especially when we have, for example, daycare centres, universities, hospitals, the very places where we want to ensure physical, mental and social peace and safety in those environments, those are the very places that we need to have institutionalized, codified measurements so we can actually see across the board, particularly in our public spaces.

Speaker, with that, as I mentioned earlier, I'm honored to have the support of a subset of the health care caucus: Dr. Helena Jaczek from Oak Ridges—Markham and the honorable Soo Wong, a registered nurse from Scarborough—Agincourt. They will also speak to the deep, important, abiding and urgent need for radon measurement and remediation in the province of Ontario to avoid long-term radiation-induced lung cancer and bodily damage.

1400

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** At the beginning here, I want to show some appreciation for the presentation this morning by the Radiation Safety Institute of Canada. The information kit that they provided each of us on this issue has been described by the mover of the bill.

To put it in context, the board of governors has some pretty august individuals there. I'll just give a couple of names and shout-outs: the Honourable Steve Mahoney, of course, who's here; Roy McMurtry, who is well respected; Patrick Dillon, who is on the College of Trades and many other things that the McGuinty government has placed him on; Duncan Hawthorne, the chief executive officer for Bruce Power; and a number of other distinguished individuals. It's a real triumvirate—in fact, it's very representative of First Nations—of industry, government and labour, which is an important thing.

In the information they provided, there's a cross-Canada survey on radon concentrations in homes. It's a final report. I had the occasion to look at Durham—the riding that I represent—and some of the surrounding areas. The sample sizes are quite small, but it is important.

I would say at the outset and make it very clear that we would support the bill to go to hearings—some of the mechanics within the bill; not the safety arguments that have been put on the table. That isn't the issue. There are scientists here. The minister who introduced the bill initially—I have great respect for the work he has done, and he is very familiar with the issue, as he worked in that industry.

Why I'm standing here is because I met with a constituent of mine—I'll put his name on the record—Bob Wood, president of the Canadian Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists. They're dedicated to helping Canadians understand the reduced rate of gas exposure in the home, and they are supportive of the bill as well. I did meet and spend some time, and much of the data that has been presented here in the House is important.

On the technical side of the bill, I want to make some clear distinctions. They need to be addressed. I saw some maps that put areas of the province in red, which means highly exposed—and other areas that weren't highly exposed. The moment I was in real estate, I would look at these red areas. If a house was worth \$500,000 and this gets out, the house would be worth \$200,000. So there are implications with these maps. I need to completely understand the accuracy of the science. These sample sizes of 90 or 95 people are not significant when you're looking at a population of, say, a million people or something like that.

I know it's random, and I know how it moves slowly through the soil—the gas that has been described—the component of measurements and the standards.

The point here is, really, this is a national issue. That's important. There should be national standards so we're

not targeting areas or avoiding targeting other areas. That's potentially risky.

Here's what the bill itself says. The act requires a Ontario Radon Registry and requires random measurements, which is problematic; it should be a scientific-based solution.

Then it says, "The minister is required to educate the public," which we're doing. I think it's important, and I thank you openly, publicly and personally as well. I do have one of those measurement devices, and I know a specific home that I want it to be used in.

It uses a word here which is a legal thing. It "encourages" homeowners to measure radon levels. "Encourage" means it's not the law.

Here's what it does say: "The minister is also required"—that's the word, between "encourage" and "required"; this is what lawyers do—"to ensure that the radon level in every provincially owned dwelling is measured" and remediation taken, which is appropriate. But you see the inconsistency of "encourage" and "require." That's the issue here, in my view. It's the only issue. It's not the science. Do you understand? The moment you're required to do it and you have it, bingo, the house is worth nothing. That's the issue; that's the only issue. Now, it's not all about the money, but I'll stop there, because other, more qualified, people wish to speak on this, but I would like to see it go to committee.

Thank you for presenting the bill to us today.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**M<sup>rs</sup> France Gélinas:** I'm really pleased to be able to talk about Bill 96, the Radon Awareness and Prevention Act, that was presented by my colleague across the aisle. This is a bill that the NDP will be supporting, and I will try to explain why.

My colleague went into quite a bit of detail to explain to people who are listening what radon is and why it is so dangerous. I won't repeat what he had said, but let's start this by making it clear that once this particle gets into your lungs, it will stay in your lungs, it will do damage to your lung tissue, and your chances of getting lung cancer go through the roof.

Although we have made much progress in treating lung cancer, unfortunately it is often fatal. I cannot stress enough that this is a preventable illness. If you don't breathe this in, it doesn't get into your lungs. If you know where it is, how to get rid of it is relatively simple: ventilate the place.

I come from Nickel Belt. When people talk about nickel, they talk about Sudbury. All of the mines in Nickel Belt are in my riding. Some of them are incredibly deep. If you look at Creighton mine, it's more than a mile deep.

The member has already explained that this gas that attaches itself to dust is very heavy, so if you think that it goes to the bottom of your house, like in the basement, think of where it goes in a mine: at the bottom of the shaft, where the workers are.



Is this something that we are aware of? Absolutely. Anybody who works in a mine will tell you that you have to look at the concentration of radon in the air. They do this. When you do find it, the solutions are not hard. Ventilate the place better, the stuff goes out, and you're done. The bill says it very well. It's a question of awareness.

When we talk about awareness, there are many, many stories and many heroes that come from my riding. There's a man called Homer Seguin, who is a hero and a champion because he recognized a health and safety issue and did something about it. There is another hero in my riding called Jean Gagnon. Jean Gagnon was a grade 10-educated Frenchman who came to work in the mine and saw what was happening in the sintering plant, where all 250 men—there were no women at the time—who worked there died. They all died of cancer because in the dust particles in the sintering plant was something that was giving you cancer, and all of them are dead—four, actually, are still alive and are battling cancer.

I'm telling you that because it's the point of the power of awareness. Once you know about something, you can take steps to prevent it; you can take steps to protect yourself. In the case of this particular gas that attaches itself to dust, we know how to measure it. We know where you can find it. I come from hard rock mining. Do we move rock in Sudbury? There's blasting going on pretty well every five minutes. If there's any gas to be released in between the cracks, it's going to happen in a mining town.

There's another mining town not so far away, where my colleague lives, that has uranium mines. The same thing happens there. This gas comes into our homes through little cracks in the basement. You may not know this, but even in beautiful neighbourhoods where the homes are worth—a half-million-dollar home in Sudbury is really, really nice; it's not like in Toronto. A \$300,000 home in Sudbury is a very nice home. Many of us have rocks in our basement. I have a nice house. I have a big rock in my basement. That's just the way it is when you live in the centre of the Canadian Shield. But in and around those rocks, vapours can come in from underground. Everywhere in Sudbury, there is tunneling and there are mines. Although the shaft may be miles away from your home, the tunnels go for miles and miles underground. They come under our houses and they come under our city, and some of that gas comes up.

1410

A lot of work has been done by the champions I was talking to you about: Homer Seguin and Jean Gagnon. But at the same time awareness has taken place in the workplace, it has not been transferred to the homes and to the people of Ontario. So I know that people are always worried when you look at a map and you see that "I live on this map and it's in red"—code red or something; I'm not too sure. I don't know why it's in red, but it's always in red when it's something dangerous. For anybody who works in a mining community, there's a good chance that your house is someplace on the map that is in red. Am I

going to run away and sell my house? Absolutely not. But am I going to protect myself? I bet you. And it's easy to do.

Although we're not allowed to use props, somehow a prop was sort of used today to show you what this thing looks like. It's a little box about that big by that thick. You stick it in your basement; three months later, you get the reading. For \$15, \$25—voilà. I wouldn't call this a big investment. And if you do find out that the reading is above what it's supposed to do, here again, ventilation of a home is not rocket science here. We're talking about better circulation. We're talking about an air exchanger. We're talking about things that are there, which kind of brings me to the next step as to, when finding out about this is pretty easy, when taking measures to protect you is also not that hard. When we look at the federal level and the building code has already been changed to make sure that you protect yourself—because protection is way easier than dealing with it once you're sick—I'm sort of surprised that we haven't moved on this in Ontario.

I'm happy that the member is bringing a private member's bill, and I guarantee you I will do my utmost to make sure that it gets supported, to support him, to support the bill so that it becomes law in Ontario. But there are alternatives to this. The government could easily change the building code this afternoon. It doesn't even come to the House. It's just a regulation that would change the building code to ensure the level of air exchange that the federal building code has put in. Then you don't have to worry. From now on, you know that people don't have to put this little thing in their basement anymore. They don't have to pay the \$25 to have it read. They don't have to worry because the homes will be built in a way that makes sure that you are not at risk. It's not going to change all of the homes that already exist, I agree, but from now on, it would protect everybody.

It always surprises me when here are members of the Liberal caucus—I would say pretty knowledgeable members of that caucus—who come forward with well-prepared private member's bills that are supported by people with incredible knowledge, and yet easy solutions exist that could make a difference but are not being acted upon. It leaves me puzzled. But there are very many things that puzzle me about this place, so this is just one more of them in a long series of puzzling stuff.

But that put aside, never, never underestimate the power of one person. When Jean Gagnon first stepped foot into the sintering plant and told the guys around him to wear their masks, he was laughed at. The boss basically isolated him, in hope that he would go away or transfer to another place. Slowly but surely, he was able to make a small change—a small change that was the right thing to do. He was able to tell people at work that, "When you work in this environment, you have to wear a mask." Although for a lot of the guys it was too late, for a lot of people that came after him, it helped tremendously.

Don't get me wrong: The sintering plant is gone, and I never want it back—not in Sudbury, not in Ontario, not anywhere; that was way too dangerous. But the point is

that when a member of this assembly rises and when he brings forward the level of information that he has shared with us today about what radon is about and the risk that that brings to our health, I think that it's an impetus for all of us to move this forward. We all know more today than we did before we started this discussion, and I think it's up to all of us to bring the knowledge that we now have back to your communities and encourage people.

The stats that he has talked about are staggering: 850 people die each and every year in Ontario because of lung cancer because of this gas. That's over two deaths every single day in this province. I don't know if you've had a loved one go through treatment for lung cancer; it's better to be avoided. I wish that everybody who's fighting lung cancer right now will win their battle and that the treatment will go well. But we have to face the reality that 850 Ontarians will die this year and will die next year if we don't change. The change is within our grasp. I think we owe it to all of us, and we owe it to every Ontarian, to put our shoulder to the wheel and push this bill through.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm sharing my time with my colleague from Oak Ridges—Markham.

I'd like to begin my remarks by thanking my colleague from Etobicoke North for reintroducing Bill 96, but also to acknowledge the work of the Minister of Research and Innovation for being the father of this proposed legislation. Bill 96 will raise awareness and education in Ontario, but, most importantly, it's about protecting Ontarians across the province.

As my colleague from Etobicoke North said earlier, as a registered nurse for almost 30 years and an advocate for a smoke-free Ontario for almost 30 years now, I see this proposed legislation as more than just about public safety. This is a public health issue, so let me start with that premise in my remarks.

A very key component of Bill 96 is about public education. For those of you who are watching today, on page 2 of the proposed legislation, it says about the duty of the minister in terms of this proposed legislation. The minister "shall conduct public education programs, and provide the public with information, about the health risks associated with exposure to radon and ways to reduce the risks."

A very important part of Bill 96 is to educate the public and raise awareness about the negative health effects associated with radon. We know the data, and my colleague from Nickel Belt just eloquently spoke about the fact that, right now, we know—there's enough research and data to prove it—that radon significantly increases the risk of developing lung cancer.

The next question has to be asked: What are we doing about it? It's one thing when we don't have the information and we don't do anything. Now that we have the information—furthermore, we also know that 90% of all lung cancer deaths are associated with smoking, but smoking is one piece. We also know that radon—a 1-in-3

chance of developing lung cancer. Again, my colleague from Nickel Belt also mentioned this particular statistic.

The other big part of the proposed legislation that I want to focus my minimal time here on is the proposed radon registry, which is a very, very important part of the proposed Bill 96. This registry, if the bill is passed, is similar to the one that has been enacted in the United Kingdom, whereby you can track the trends and history of radon levels across Ontario.

**1420**

I heard my colleague from Durham, the concern about the value of the home etc. Let me be very clear: Yes, I am concerned about a home's value, but let's not kid ourselves. The most important part of each of our roles and responsibilities in this House is our safety. There's no price on the cost of your family's safety and every Ontarian's safety. Let's let that be very clear.

The proposed bill talks extensively about creating a registry that would address a number of pieces. Let me go through what the registry would do.

It would be a useful tool to track trends and history, but more importantly, it would assist individuals such as homebuilders, professionals and residents in an effort to control radon exposure by providing historical indoor radon records; contribute to ongoing updates of radon maps and assist governments both provincially and at the municipal level in identifying radon-prone areas; and find ways to monitor mitigation to reduce radon in the neighbourhood.

But more importantly, this type of registry raises awareness and educates the community. Again, like I said, 60 years ago we knew very little about the cost and health effects of second-hand smoke. Look at how long it has taken our community to have our government ban smoking across the province of Ontario, not just in workplaces; it's now gone into public places like restaurants, and I believe the city of Mississauga and Durham region have extensively gone outdoors in terms of second-hand smoke.

In terms of the proposed legislation, I want to, in ending my remarks, applaud my colleague from Etobicoke North and the Minister of Research and Innovation for providing the leadership to protect Ontarians and making sure every dwelling, every public place in Ontario, is safe and not exposed to radon.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** I'm happy to rise today to speak to Bill 96, the Radon Awareness and Prevention Act. Like Bill 77, the carbon monoxide act brought forward by my colleague the member for Oxford, Bill 96 has the potential to make a positive impact on Ontario homes and workplaces. Like carbon monoxide, radon is a colourless, odorless and tasteless gas that can build up in enclosed spaces. Also like carbon monoxide, it is a silent killer.

Radon is naturally found in the environment and comes from the decay of uranium in rock, soil and water. As you might expect, it is radioactive and a health



hazard. Radon won't suddenly kill you when you sleep, but breathing air containing high levels of radon has been connected to an increased risk of lung cancer.

What kind of risk are we talking about? According to estimates by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, radon is the second most frequent cause of lung cancer after smoking cigarettes. In fact, some EPA studies suggest radon is the number one cause of lung cancer among non-smokers, slightly higher than second-hand smoke. An estimated 10% of lung cancer deaths in Canada are directly related to radon exposures in homes and other buildings, and 40% of those deaths are in Ontario. That's roughly 800 deaths every year due to indoor exposure. Unlike carbon monoxide, however, radon has made limited headway in terms of public awareness.

One of the key elements of Bill 96 is the requirements for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to educate the public about radon and encourage homeowners to measure radon levels in their homes and take whatever action is necessary. The minister would also have to ensure that radon levels in every provincially owned building are measured and that corrective action is taken where needed. Owners of enclosed workplaces would have similar obligations.

A two-year nationwide Health Canada study found that one in 20 Ontario homes had radon levels above the current recommended guidelines. If you're worried that you might be one, you can pick up a do-it-yourself kit for about \$40.

This is a real problem, so it's good that we have a chance here today to increase awareness around this issue and to work together toward solutions. Bill 96 is legislation I'm happy to support.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** It is my pleasure to rise again in support of the Radon Awareness and Prevention Act, 2013, which provides for the establishment of the Ontario Radon Registry and seeks to reduce radon levels in dwellings and workplaces. It was introduced, as has been mentioned, by my friend and colleague the member for Richmond Hill, now the Minister of Research and Innovation—as we all know, a physicist, a scientist, and the first to alert this Legislature to this problem—and now, of course, by my friend, colleague and fellow physician, the member for Etobicoke North. I would also like to thank the members of the Radiation Safety Institute, the Canadian Cancer Society and the Ontario Lung Association for their reception this morning.

As a physician, I'm going to be emphasizing the negative health effects of radon, primarily lung cancer and death. Our colleague from Nickel Belt, as always, has reminded us of the human toll. For me, the statistics are truly alarming, very important and, of course, do cause the kind of anguish in the sufferers and their families. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in Ontario, and you may be surprised to hear that radon is one of the leading causes of it, second only, of course, to tobacco smoking. Once diagnosed with lung cancer,

individuals only have a 15% chance of living longer than five years.

Thirteen per cent of lung cancer deaths are due to radon. This translates, as many people have already said, but repetition is always good, to some 2,000 lung cancer deaths per year in Canada, which would mean some 850 deaths a year in Ontario alone due to radon exposure. On average, that means approximately two deaths per day here in Ontario due to radon.

Many jurisdictions have examined the impact of radon in the causation of lung cancer and have found similar statistics. So again, in the United States, 10% to 15% of all lung cancers are due to radon, and the European community has estimated some 15% of all lung cancers. So you've got a great deal of consistency, which is always reassuring from the scientific point of view to decide whether there is a causative factor at play.

As has been said, no formal regulation on what is an acceptable level of radon in a dwelling exists in Canada. However, Health Canada, along with the Federal Provincial Territorial Radiation Protection Committee, did develop some radon guidelines a number of years ago. As has been said, the unit of radiation used to measure exposure to radon is becquerels per cubic metre of air, and the Health Canada guideline for safe exposure was reduced from 800 becquerels per cubic metre to 200 becquerels per cubic metre of air in 2007. However, most industrialized countries have far more stringent standards than Canada. As an example, in the United States, the safe level is 150 becquerels per cubic metre and the WHO guideline is 100 becquerels per cubic metre.

Between the years of 2010 and 2012, Health Canada performed a cross-country survey on the presence of radon in Canadian homes. It was discovered that 7% of all homes in Canada have radon levels of over 200 becquerels per cubic metre, and that the average for Ontario is 4.6% above the 200 becquerels per cubic metre level. This may sound relatively small, but it's certainly very significant.

Public Health Ontario calculated the number of radon-related deaths attributable to exposure to radon in an article published online on August 14, 2013, titled "Lung Cancer Risk from Radon in Ontario, Canada: How Many Lung Cancers Can We Prevent?" At this point, I'd actually like to put very sincere appreciation to Public Health Ontario. It's an agency that not many people are aware of. It was brought into being following the SARS epidemic of 2003. Dr. Sheela Basrur, the former chief medical officer of health for Ontario, recommended that such an agency be put in place. It was originally known as the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion, now Public Health Ontario. It's under the leadership of Dr. Vivek Goel, and they are incredibly open to receiving your questions on issues related not only to infectious disease, which was the original purpose of the agency, but any epidemiological or toxicological questions you may have.

1430

In this article, they discovered that if all homes in Ontario above 200 becquerels per cubic metre—the

current Canadian guideline—were remediated to background levels, it is estimated that 91 radon-related lung cancer deaths could be prevented each year in Ontario. Looking at some other guidelines: If we adopted the American guideline, we would save some 149 individuals from lung cancer deaths; the World Health Organization guideline, at 100 becquerels per cubic metre, would prevent some 233 lung cancer deaths.

In 2009, the World Health Organization published their Handbook on Indoor Radon: A Public Health Perspective, which takes that very important preventive approach to radon exposure. It recommends that national, regional or local authorities consider enacting building regulations and building codes requiring radon protection measures in all new buildings under construction. This bill does that. The handbook also stressed the need for educating the public about the benefits of radon prevention. Again, this bill does exactly that.

It's somewhat ironic that we have legislation in Ontario that does protect those who work in the nuclear energy industry, those exposed to X-rays and those who work in uranium mines, but in our own homes, where people live and raise their families, and in buildings where people congregate—schools, hospitals, long-term-care facilities, correctional facilities etc., we are not governed by these same protections. Clearly, these areas need more than the current Health Canada guidelines. This legislation addresses these important components, and I urge all members of this House to support this very important bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I'm pleased to be able to rise today and add my voice to supporting this particular initiative.

One of the dangers we have in looking at this issue is the fact that there seem to be so many other things that are demanding our attention, and yet when you begin to understand the importance of radon and the fact that it can be in your basement, and because it's a natural chemical that is odourless and so forth, it's very difficult to squeeze it onto the radar screen of public awareness, and I think that's probably the biggest challenge we face. By bringing it to the attention of the Legislature, albeit for the third time, it's very important to continue to work on the notion of how important it is and raise that level of awareness. It's certainly true when you look at other issues that sometimes grab public attention and are relatively minor.

I know for me, one of the most important features of learning about this was the fact that you often hear people talk about someone who has passed away as a result of lung cancer and who never smoked. It's almost like a defiance: "You see; it's not the only cause." I think that, today, when we know that it is the second cause, it's working from that level of awareness that is vital to being able to make people aware how these dangers exist.

Certainly for me, I thought back on those people I knew who died of lung cancer but they never smoked,

and now we know that it can be mitigated for such a relatively small cost. To be able to buy a kit for \$40 or \$50, to be able to mitigate the escape of the gas in your own home or in a public building: These are fairly simple, straightforward initiatives that you can take. It belongs in the same category as the member from Oxford's bill, the Hawkins Gignac bill. We should act on it and on this in a timely way and bring that kind of measure of safety to our homes across the province.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I'm very pleased to rise today to speak in favour of Bill 96, An Act to raise awareness about radon, provide for the Ontario Radon Registry and reduce radon levels in dwellings and workplaces. I would like to thank the members from the Radiation Safety Institute of Canada who took the time to meet with me about a month or so ago, and thank Mr. Mahoney, particularly, and his staff for pointing out the need to have Bill 96 enacted and to speak in favour of it.

We have heard about the dangers of radon. I think it's very little understood by most Canadians, and I think it is important that we bring this forward at this time. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, radon is the second most frequent cause of lung cancer after cigarettes, resulting in an estimated 21,000 lung cancer deaths each year. Of course, radon is also the number one cause of lung cancer for non-smokers.

The World Health Organization also states that radon causes 15% of lung cancers worldwide, and it has also started an international radon awareness project to help other countries raise awareness, collect data and encourage action to reduce radon-related risks. Dr. Michael Repacholi, the World Health Organization's radiation and environmental health unit coordinator, stated, "Radon poses an easily reducible health risk to populations all over the world, but has not up to now received widespread attention."

I see I'm running out of time rather quickly here, Mr. Speaker, but all I can say is that this is important because, as the member from York-Simcoe has indicated, this can be very easily mitigated, but it has to start with awareness. I'm very pleased to see that it looks like it will receive all-party support.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Etobicoke North, you have two minutes for a response.

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri:** I'd like to thank my colleagues from the PC side, the members from Durham, York-Simcoe and Whitby Oshawa; my colleague from the NDP, France Gélinas, députée de l'Assemblée législative pour la circonscription de Nickel Belt; and, of course, my own colleagues from Scarborough-Agincourt and Oak Ridges-Markham.

An important issue: Radon needs to be, I think, much more in the public awareness, as was mentioned by my colleague from Oak Ridges-Markham. She reviewed a number of the scientific facts: the fact that it's ever-present, it's in enclosed spaces and it's leaking from, for example, substructure, stone and rock formations.



We need to create an Ontario registry. We need to actually have a map, especially in high-density, high-traffic areas, for example, daycare centres, public hospitals, universities and even, by the way, high-rise buildings. This is an important issue, not only for public health and medical care, but ongoing, because as we have more and more of our built environment and intensification going on across the GTHA and many other locations, radon unfortunately seems to be becoming more and more prevalent, and therefore, its by-product—lung cancer—because of the inhaled particles.

So, it's an important issue. We need to measure it. I agree with some of my colleagues here who say that we need to institutionalize it, codify it and make it part of Ontario law. I'm certainly going to speak to my fellow colleagues here in caucus. I would simply conclude by saying that we don't really care what you wear on your head on this side, but we are concerned about the air that you breathe, particularly if it includes excess amounts of radon.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. We will take the vote at the end of private members' business.

#### PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I move that, in the opinion of this House, Ontario should endorse the new National Standard of Canada for psychological health and safety in the workplace entitled "Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace—Prevention, Promotion and Guidance to Staged Implementation."

The National Standard of Canada is a voluntary standard developed by the Mental Health Commission of Canada that provides a systematic approach to develop and sustain a psychologically healthy and safe workplace by focusing on promoting employees' psychological health and preventing psychological harm due to workplace factors through:

- the identification of psychological hazards in the workplace;

- the assessment and control of the risks in the workplace associated with hazards that cannot be eliminated (e.g. stressors due to organizational change or reasonable job demands);

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- the implementation of practices that support and promote psychological health and safety in the workplace;

- the growth of a culture that promotes psychological health and safety in the workplace; and finally

- the implementation of measurement and review systems to ensure sustainability.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** It is a pleasure to rise this afternoon to bring forward what I think is a very straightforward but a very important motion.

I would like to, when I start, first introduce some guests who have joined me here today. From the Canadian Mental Health Association of Halton, we have the chair of the board, Kimbalin Kelly, with us today. Kimbalin, thank you for joining us; it is appreciated.

Mental health, I think, as all members in this House know, is an issue that affects or has impacted every member of this Legislature in some way, or certainly their families. I think we all have a family member or we have a friend or we've got constituents who have faced mental health challenges at some point in their life. Even some members in this House probably have personal experiences of their own.

The motion that I'm bringing forward today, and asking for your support on, focuses on building a healthy workplace in the province of Ontario. I've already outlined the motion. What I would like to do is talk about what gave me an interest in this issue in the first place, and that is that some time ago, I got the opportunity to talk about the impact of mental health challenges on our workplaces and our economy.

But I think it's worthwhile to go back a few years and remember that, at a very important moment in our province's history, we did something in this chamber when it came to dealing with mental health and addictions issues. Some of the members who are present today would be quite familiar with that exercise, and it was the work of the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions.

It was a time when all three political parties pulled together in this Legislature, came together on a very, very important issue. In fact, it was a motion that came from a very well-regarded member of the opposition, the member for Whitby—Oshawa, that led to the creation of the select committee. It was approved by the government, and it was supported by the third party. I had the privilege of chairing this committee.

What we found out from the report is that there was something we could do. There were changes we could make.

Each of the province's three political parties was represented on that committee by members who I think stepped forward. They weren't asked to serve. They stepped forward; they volunteered to serve because they had a personal commitment to people who were living with a mental illness or with an addiction. Regardless of our political convictions or any partisanship, we recognized as a group that we could do better, and we must do better.

I want to just go over the people who were on that committee. There was the person who came up with the idea in the first place, the member from Whitby—Oshawa, Christine Elliott, who is with us today; you yourself, Speaker, the member for Scarborough—Rouge River, Bas Balkissoon; the member from the third party, from Nickel Belt, France Gélinas; Oak Ridges—Markham,

from the Liberal side, Helena Jaczek; Dufferin–Caledon, from the Conservative Party, Sylvia Jones; Peterborough, well represented by Jeff Leal; Guelph, represented by the now-Minister of Education, Liz Sandals; and a former member of this House who was very well thought of, from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex, Maria van Bommel.

Our committee held public hearings on 30 dates, and we heard testimony from over 230 presenters from all regions of the province of Ontario. We looked at over 300 submissions that came in the form of DVDs, journal articles and briefs. We also went beyond the traditional hearing venues. We were allowed to make site visits to mental health and addictions facilities in several First Nations communities. The stories and the experiences we heard greatly affected each member of the committee. We worked co-operatively and we came up with what I thought was an excellent report with a series of recommendations.

In response, the province launched Open Minds, Healthy Minds, which was a comprehensive plan for mental health and addictions. It offers a comprehensive approach to transforming the mental health system through a clear mission forward and long-term strategies for change.

The first three years of this plan started with children and youth, and over \$11 million to place 144 mental health nurses in our schools. We created 19 new specialized nurse practitioners. We started providing culturally appropriate services to more than 4,000 aboriginal children by providing more than 80 new aboriginal mental health and addictions workers. This keeps youth out of the justice system by adding more mental health court workers. We invested in youth, and over 500,000 Ontarians were served by community mental health and addictions programs in 2010-11. So I believe we're a long way towards doing what is the right thing to do for our children. The next step, obviously, is to work on an adult strategy, and I look forward to that.

We're working with First Nations communities because we found there was a special need in those communities, and we've also realized, from a gambling and addictions perspective, that we need to do more, and we've provided, at this point, as a result of the committee's work, over \$39 million in new funding.

Now, at the same time we were doing our work, there were other organizations around the country who were doing similar work, because I think people around the country and the province had said, "This is an issue whose time has come." In 2006, a standing Senate committee of the federal government completed the first national study of mental health, mental illness and addiction. It found that across this country a number of challenges faced Canadians dealing with mental health issues. This helped launch the Mental Health Commission of Canada, and what they had a mandate to do was bring together leaders and organizations from across this country to improve the mental health system and to begin to change the attitudes and behaviours of Canadians towards mental health. It has created a number of

partnerships. It focuses on key projects and issues, and it makes recommendations as to how to best improve systems that are directly related to mental health.

One of the commission's focuses is on helping employers improve how they can protect their own employees' mental health in workplaces to better prevent mental health problems and illnesses. The commission has led to the development of a voluntary national standard for psychological health and safety in the workplace. It also developed recommendations to support increased employment among those people in our society who are living with a mental health problem or an illness.

The standards were developed because what was discovered was that mental problems, mental illness, mental health has a staggering impact on our economy. The select committee heard that, nationally, the impact could be as high as \$30 billion a year, but the latest numbers are showing that this is probably even higher, and accelerating.

In any given year, one in five Canadians will experience a mental health problem or illness. Nearly a quarter of the country's working population is currently affected by mental health problems or illnesses, leading sometimes to absenteeism and sometimes "presenteeism," which is coming to work but not being very productive. It also leads to employee turnover.

It appears from the research that adults in their early and prime working years are among the hardest hit. Approximately 30% of short- and long-term claims for disability in Canada can be directly attributed to mental health problems and illnesses. Over the next 30 years, the cost of lost productivity due to absenteeism, presenteeism and turnover is estimated to reach a staggering \$198 billion in today's dollars. It is the number one cause—and this surprises a lot of people, Speaker—of disability in Canada.

Senator Michael Kirby, chair of the Mental Health Commission of Canada, in a 2007 speech to the Canadian Club in Vancouver, highlighted the paradox of work and cited a witness before the Senate committee, who said, "Therein we have one of the fundamental paradoxes we face today: Work is good for your mental health and work can make you crazy." That is, I think, getting right down to the issue.

Now, some companies have taken a lead role in this. Some companies have done a fantastic job, and I'm asking Ontario to follow in the footsteps of some of those corporate leaders who have started to take action. I wanted to use the time remaining just to tell you about some of the companies that have done a great job.

I'm going to start with Bell Canada. It's one of the companies that was first out of the gate to endorse this national standard. In September 2010, Bell Canada launched a comprehensive strategy aimed at getting people in Canada simply to communicate about the issue of mental health. The strategy—we've all seen it on TV—is called "Let's Talk." What it is, is Bell donates a fixed amount of money to stigma reduction and to other mental health programs based on the uses of long



distance on a certain day or texts on a certain day. The president and CEO of Bell Canada, George Cope, has noted that on any given day in Canada, 500,000 Canadians are absent from work due to psychiatric problems. As I said before, it's the number one cause of long-term disability, so it makes business sense as well as social sense.

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Another good company that has moved a long way is one that we'll be familiar with in these chambers, and that's Great West Life, our own carrier, a large Canadian insurance company. As a service to all employers in Canada, GWL, Great West Life, offers a Web-based program called Workplace Strategies for Mental Health. The program has two objectives. The first is to increase knowledge and awareness of mental health, and secondly, to enable employers to turn that knowledge into action in a cost-effective way.

Another company, Morneau Shepell, is the largest company in Canada that offers human resources consulting and outsourcing services. It has introduced an innovative approach to workplace mental health for human resource leaders.

Other companies that have made efforts include Manulife, Canada Post and Scotiabank.

What I've heard in the local community—and why I'm asking all members to support this motion is because I think they would hear this in their own communities as well. This is from the chair or the CEO of my own LHIN, the Mississauga Halton LHIN. What Bill MacLeod says is, "Keeping people healthy is a responsibility that must be shared to make a true difference. Employers who understand the importance of optimal mental and physical health in the workplace are essential partners in building healthy communities."

Other people who have stepped forward include certainly the head of psychiatry at Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital. What he says is that employers should be applauded in promoting the mental health of Ontarians, that we need to have a vision to appreciate its relevance to our province's success.

When we consider that 30% to 50% of all short- and long-term disability claims in Canada are due to mental-health-related issues, we must acknowledge that our mental health programs are a priority, especially in the workplace, where we spend the majority of our working hours.

My time is just about up. I'm asking all members of this House to help this province take a step forward by becoming the first province in Canada to endorse the work of the Mental Health Commission of Canada and to take a lead in ensuring that Ontarians have a better future as they deal with mental illness.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I'm very pleased to have the opportunity this afternoon to speak to the member from Oakville's motion concerning psychological health and safety in the workplace. Certainly the national standard,

of course, that he was referring to was developed under the leadership of the Mental Health Commission of Canada, and I think it is important to note that it is, of course, a voluntary standard and was developed with the assistance of a technical committee that consisted of employers, organized labour, service providers, government and regulatory authorities, and workplace mental health and safety specialists. It's pretty recent. It was just released in January 2013.

The work that's being done by the commission is really groundbreaking. The Mental Health Commission of Canada was established by the federal government in 2007, and they have a number of wonderful projects that they are working on right now, including six pilot projects on homelessness in major cities across Canada. So they're really looking at finding solutions to that major problem that is affecting so many people in our cities as well.

In fact, it was the creation of the Mental Health Commission of Canada that was the inspiration for the creation of the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions here in this Legislature. Like the member from Oakville, I would say that it was one of the best things that I've done since being elected here seven years ago, to have the opportunity to work with my colleagues here in the Legislature, and the member from Oakville kindly named everyone who was involved in it. But I think that was what was sort of the impetus for that, to allow for a provincial organization and to develop recommendations that could work in sync with the work that's being done by the Mental Health Commission of Canada. So I would say that today's motion is very much in keeping with the work that was done by the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions. I've brought a copy of our report here that was completed in August 2010.

One of the things that we talked about in the select committee—we made 23 recommendations, and one of them was to work with employers to develop more opportunities for people living with a mental illness to participate in the workforce.

Currently, largely because of the stigma that's still associated with mental illness, it's very difficult for people with a mental illness to get a job and to keep a job because, a lot of times, employers simply don't know how to deal with it. While I think employers are currently pretty accommodating to people who have a physical disability, there's still a lack of education about what to do with someone who has a mental illness. I think that developing psychologically healthy workplaces is another important step that we need to take in making sure that we can get everybody who wants to work and is able to work into our workforce.

The standard, as I said before, is voluntary. I think that's really important to note, but I have a suspicion that there will be a lot of companies that will want to become involved with this because it's—financially, first of all—in their interest. As the member from Oakville indicated, mental health illnesses are estimated to account for

somewhere between 30% to 50% of both short- and long-term disability claims in Canada, and more than 80% of employers note mental illness among the top three drivers of both short- and long-term disability claims. So first and foremost, if you're only looking at the financial bottom line, it's in the interest of employers to be involved in developing some kind of standards in their own workplace.

Of course, there are many other reasons for employees. It's in their interest to have the standard being adopted and having a program in the workplace because it just creates a more safe and welcoming atmosphere that allows people to work better. We hear a lot about people being bullied and harassed in the workplace. If you have a standard that everyone can adhere to, hopefully you would see that disappear.

For employers, besides the direct financial costs, there are, of course, the indirect costs. It has been cited as a really important risk-management tool because as more and more employers are becoming legally responsible for incidents of harassment in the workplace, this will be one way for them to mitigate that risk: by having proper processes in place in the workplace.

It also leads to increased organizational recruitment. One of the things that many businesses have found is that by hiring people with a variety of abilities and needs in their workforce, it can allow them to be more creative and more flexible and to be able to develop their products and services more fully. So again, it helps the employers in recruiting good people and in improving their own products.

Finally, it's good corporate social responsibility, and I think increasingly corporations are taking a look at that and wanting to be more responsible.

In addition to this motion, which of course I said I fully support, there is another one that I would just like to mention; another resolution—or act, actually—that is before the Legislature, or hopefully will come back, and that's Bill 32, the Registered Human Resources Professionals Act, which was brought by the now Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and co-sponsored both by me and by the member from Beaches–East York. It doesn't directly deal with it, but it strengthens the role of human resource professionals, and I think they're going to be the ones who are going to be key in bringing in these types of standards on psychological health in the workplace.

I would commend both this motion and the act when it comes forward—hopefully soon—for support by all parties in this Legislature.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It is a pleasure to talk to the motion introduced by the member from Oakville, as well as to respond to some of the comments that have just been made by the member from Whitby–Oshawa.

Of course, the member from Oakville was the Chair of the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions, of which I was a member, as well as the member from Oshawa. This report has made 23 recommendations, and

unfortunately very few of them have been followed through. But that doesn't mean that the initial impetus to do this review is not still there. It was the member from Whitby–Oshawa who had first approached the House so that we would look at a Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions. In the way that this House works, for reasons unexplained, it actually got picked up. Eighteen months of work went into this, and I think some pretty solid recommendations came out. Although I'm disappointed that no action has been taken from those recommendations—or very few; they've acted on one of them—the work in itself helped raise awareness about mental illness and addiction.

**1500**

Some of the statistics have been shared with you, but I'd like to repeat some of them just because the numbers are staggering in and of themselves.

When we talk about the 4,000 Canadians who commit suicide every year, every one of those 4,000 deaths is preventable. Healthy people don't commit suicide. People who are ill or people who have a mental illness are at very high risk of finding themselves within those 4,000 people.

Some 30% of short-term and long-term disability claims are for mental health problems. If we ask employers, 80% of them will tell you that mental health problems and illnesses are in the top-three drivers of short-term and long-term disability claims. Some 47% of all approved disability claims in the civil service in 2010 were due to mental health conditions. We've already shared with you that \$6 billion in lost productivity is directly linked to mental health problems and illnesses. That's a lot of money.

The stats go on and on. In any given week, there are 500,000 Canadian employees who are not able to work because of a mental health problem; there are about 355,000 disability cases due to mental health and behaviour problems; and there will be 175,000 full-time workers who will call in sick because of a mental health issue.

What the member from Oakville has brought forward is a way for employers to be proactive in helping those workers.

Some parallels have been done between the accommodations we do for physical illness and the lack of accommodations we do for mental illness—because mental illness is still stigmatized. In many, many workplaces, if you show a mental illness, you are told, "Toughen up, princess, and move on." You are stigmatized. You are passed over. You are treated differently. This is wrong. It is wrong on many, many levels, but it happens.

People in Ontario have empathy. When we hear that somebody in our midst is sick, we want to help them. We want them to feel better. But if we hear that they have a mental illness, we isolate them. We shut them out. We make it harder for them to get better. The motion that we have here would turn that on its head and will make sure that we do what comes naturally to a lot of people when they face a physical illness—but for some strange reason



continue to be discriminated against when it comes to mental illness.

The first thing that this motion is going to do is that we would have an active stance by employers to prevent harm to workers' psychological health. If we go on with this today, we will give the tools to employers to be able to assess the risk and prevent harm before it's done. That means identifying stressors and identifying ways that people become mentally unwell because of what they do at work. Then we would look at how we promote psychological well-being. So not only do we make sure that our workplaces prevent harm from happening, but employers would take an active role in promoting psychological well-being.

The member from Oakville has named a number of employers who have already started to do this. Bell Canada has to be commended for their Let's Talk program, which they launched Canada-wide. Basically, this is one piece of a fairly well developed health promotion strategy that looks at how you build resilience, how you make people psychologically healthy.

The parallel can be drawn to physical health. People understand that if you do physical exercise, such as going for a walk—a brisk walk, if you can handle it—you will do some good to your physical health, but you will also do some good to your psychological health. If you take time to build teams that work well together, it improves productivity at work, but it also acts as a way to promote good mental health, what is called promoting psychological well-being. There are many, many ways to do that at work, and each and every one of the workplaces is different.

Some workplaces, we know from the start, have a very high incidence of mental problems. If you look at all of the first responders—whether you look at firefighters, EMS personnel, police officers or people who serve in the army—those people will see things that will affect them.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** What about politicians?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** And maybe politicians, as well, my colleague is saying.

We already know that those workers are at risk. We already know that when you witness a traumatic incident, it will affect your well-being. It will affect your psychological health. It will put you at risk for mental illness.

Those workplaces tend to be dominated by men, tend to be dominated by a macho culture. They tell each other, "Suck it up, princess." This is so devastating, but it can be changed, and it is being changed.

I can talk for the Sudbury fire department, where my husband works. Things have changed dramatically from the time he first started fighting fires to what is there now. Before, a debriefing on a critical incident would take place. Everybody would more or less laugh at whoever went and talked to the debriefing counsellor, and then put him down, treat him as a sissy, and I'll spare you the rest of the words that were used.

Well, fast-forward, none of this is happening anymore. Do they continue to see critical incidents? Of course.

They're firefighters. They do first response, they go to car accidents, they're there when people pass; they're there when people have the worst day of their lives. Think of all the worst days of everyone's lives and put them all together. This is what their job looks like.

So now, critical incident debriefing is mandatory for everybody. And guess what? The rate of suicide among firefighters is going down. The same thing happens with EMS. The same thing is happening with police officers.

I'm giving you the extreme so that people understand, but you don't have to be a first responder to have stress at work. The amount of work you have, the expectations we put on you and the resources that are at your disposal to be able to face this workload are all stressors. If you take time to go through them, if you take time to have open dialogue, you will be able to put forward and promote psychological wellness.

Of course, in order to do this, you have to be able to resolve the incidents and you have to be able to resolve the concern. To identify it is a great first step, Mr. Speaker. But once you have identified it, there has to be a way of dealing with them; otherwise, all is for naught.

When you look at the work that was done by the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions, we raised expectations throughout the province. This was a committee that travelled. We travelled to the far north, where some of the First Nations are only accessible by air. We went to those First Nations. We looked at what was happening with the mental health and addiction issues, and we put forward recommendations to try to help them.

**1510**

I can't see why we're not implementing those 23 recommendations, but the step that the member from Oakville is bringing forward is progressive. It will change workplaces for the better. It is worth the support of this House. It shines a warm light on mental illness and makes it something that you can talk about without taboo, something that you can talk about that will make it easier for people to reach out. I hope we pass this motion.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** Today I rise to support the motion introduced by the MPP from Oakville asking the government of Ontario to endorse the new National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace.

It's certainly pleasant to hear about the work we did on the select committee. For those of us who were on that nonpartisan committee, it was certainly a pleasure that we could put partisan politics aside and concentrate on this extremely important issue. Of course, that committee was so ably chaired by the member from Oakville.

When we were on the select committee, we heard about the true cost of mental illness in the workplace, and it was really quite staggering. As the member from Oakville mentioned in his opening statement, these issues in the workplace could cost the Canadian economy as much as \$30 billion annually. This is simply too much. A

healthy workplace where employees can grow and thrive is vital, and a place they can be accepted and understood even more so.

Often those with mental health issues suffer in silence because of the stigma attached to them. This is especially an issue in the workplace, where people are dependent on their jobs for their livelihood, and they fear the consequences of revealing their mental health issues, so instead choose to say nothing.

Our select committee certainly felt more needed to be done to raise awareness of the role that a positive work environment plays in the success and mental health of its employees. Employers who have understanding of the challenges faced by people with mental health issues will also be better able to provide an environment where those employees can succeed in their jobs.

The national standard provides a systematic approach for companies to evaluate, implement and review their policies surrounding mental health. It encourages employers to evaluate their workplaces for psychological hazards and assess the risks associated with these hazards.

We know that a job does more than just improve a person's financial situation; it can also improve confidence and self-esteem. It provides a forum for social inclusion, a key condition for wellness. It creates independence. If companies in Ontario follow the National Standard of Canada and implement practices that support and promote psychological health in the workplace, many will benefit, not just those who have a particular mental health issue.

As the member from Oakville has said, there are many companies doing excellent work in regard to creating tolerant workplaces and developing corporate cultures that promote psychological health amongst their employees. The national standard won't hinder their efforts but would provide a framework for other companies to adopt for their own employees' benefit.

Now, our government certainly has been making progress in the field of mental health and addictions. I'm certainly very aware that not all 23 of the recommendations that the select committee made have been followed, but I'd like to assure the members of this House, in particular the member from Nickel Belt, that I'm doing everything I can, as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, to see what progress is being made. I'm told I am the terror of the bureaucrats, and I'm quite proud of that particular designation.

The government's ambitious 10-year Mental Health and Addictions Strategy seeks to break down silos and streamline service, to improve access in what is an often-complex web of systems and checkpoints. The first three years of the strategy, as has been said, have concentrated on ensuring our children with mental health issues are appropriately identified and directed to the treatment resource necessary for them.

Anecdotal evidence, I know, but I was speaking to the former president of the Ontario Medical Association,

who is himself a child psychiatrist. In his practice, he is certainly seeing progress made in the first three years of the strategy. Children are being identified much sooner and being directed to the appropriate resource they need.

In conclusion, I'd like to support the member from Oakville's motion today. This will be another step forward—perhaps not the leap we would all wish that we could take but significant in and of itself.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate? The member for Lambton—Kent—Middlesex.

**Interjection:** Chatham.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Chatham—Kent—Middlesex.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Just north of me, but Chatham—Kent—Essex.

It's my pleasure to rise today and speak to the member from Oakville's motion to endorse the National Standard of Canada for psychological health and safety in the workplace. It's incredibly important for all of us to discuss mental health in the workplace and in our workplace, the Legislative Assembly.

Promoting this issue on the job is an essential component of a comprehensive strategy to improve the mental health of all Ontarians. While on this topic, I'd also like to thank our health critic, the member from Whitby—Oshawa, for her tireless dedication to promoting mental health and addressing the many problems in our health care system today. She was an integral part of the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions, which put forth 23 recommendations to improve mental health back in 2010. Unfortunately, the mental health system in Ontario remains somewhat woefully inadequate as a number of those recommendations have yet to be implemented or perhaps have been ignored.

While doing some background research, I was really amazed to learn of the following statistics that I'd like to share with you: First of all, did you know that over half a million Canadians have missed work because of mental health problems or illness? Mental health is also the number one cause of disability claims in Canada. One in five Canadians will experience a mental health problem or illness. In Chatham-Kent, my riding, there were well over 11,000 mental health outpatients last year. All three parties promote a preventive approach to health care. If employers can take a proactive approach to encouraging mental health, we will benefit greatly in the future.

I'm reminded—several years ago, there was a TV car ad. It was about replacing the filter in your cars. The mechanic said, "You can either pay me now or pay me later." I like to think of that as, that's all about being proactive. Of course, looking at employers today, I would hope that employers would take the advice of that mechanic back in that TV ad, and that is, take proactive steps so that they can minimize, if not eliminate, the mental health aspects in the workplace today. It will lessen their costs and, overall, it will lessen the health care costs of our Ontario government.

Of course, this is also an issue that I have a personal connection to. Speaker, for 25 years, I was a motivational



speaker, teacher, trainer. I specialized in stress management, communications, staff motivation, conflict management, all of which were designed to help staff deal with change in the workplace. As we know, change can sometimes be extremely stressful because of that fear of the unknown. We need to be able to give our employees coping devices so that they know how to and can learn how to handle stress in their lives, because stress can be a 24/7 challenge, not just to employees but to every one of us even in this Legislature.

The personal toll on employees and their families is enormous. The financial cost to their employers is also significant. By adopting a voluntary standard, employers have the opportunity to improve the quality of their workplace and increase productivity.

Supporting mental health helps the individual, the employee, their family, their employer and society in general. They're able to keep working and contribute during tough economic times. By keeping Ontarians healthy and in the workplace, we can save money across the province as less people are forced to go on disability and seek treatment.

1520

I'm an advocate of: A happy employee is a productive employee, and also, a healthy employee. So let's keep those endorphins flowing. Endorphins, of course, are produced by the body; it's a natural chemical 100 times more powerful than morphine. That would keep those health costs down as well.

Speaker, I support this motion. I'm very happy that we were able to address mental health today. However, this discussion must extend beyond the walls of this Legislature for true change to happen. I hope that Ontario employers and Ontarians will keep talking and keep taking proactive steps about mental health and help reduce the stigma surrounding it. Business and government cannot afford to ignore the mental health of Ontarians. Together, we can work together to ensure that we develop and take proactive steps to create a healthy Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** One might ask how society and how workplaces might react when an employee's body breaks down. Suppose you break a bone, sprain your ankle, hurt your knee, come down with a virus or contract a disease. Is it reasonable to expect that one's family, friends, employers, neighbours and community will rally in support of someone with a body that needs to heal? The answer, of course, is yes. It's a no-brainer. The thought that one might do anything other than be as helpful and supportive as you can for an injured friend, for an injured co-worker or a family member is abhorrent—it's just not who we, as Canadians, are.

So how about a person with an injured mind? Now it's not quite so clear. Not that long ago, I remember a stand-up comic with a little bit of what he thought was dark humour, saying that anybody that would see a psychiatrist needs to have his head read. That's what makes the

bill introduced by my friend and learned seatmate from Oakville so important. What he's usually too modest to tell people is that he did his master's thesis on this topic, and its title is self-explanatory: *Workplace Mental Health and Competitive Advantage*. It's those last two words, "competitive advantage," which is what this motion is all about.

Today is a typical day in Canada, which means, as two of the previous speakers have noted, that about 500,000 people across Canada have missed work. That works out to about 170,000 lost days today in the province of Ontario. It's like losing the entire city of Kingston for a single day.

The member for Oakville's thesis uses this quote from a 2006 Senate of Canada report on mental illness:

"In no other field, except perhaps leprosy, has there been as much confusion, misdirection and discrimination against the patient, as in mental illness.... Mental illness, even today, is all too often considered a crime to be punished, a sin to be expiated, a possessing demon to be exorcised, a disgrace to be hushed up, a personality weakness to be deplored or a welfare problem to be handled as cheaply as possible."

The paradox is that small and medium-sized companies, for whom a single employee and his or her talents and expertise and skills may be strategic, are less inclined than a larger company to set aside funds and to have a plan to manage mental illness. Stress gives rise to mental illness, though much research shows that work plays a therapeutic role in a person's recovery from mental illness. The paradox, as the member from Oakville's thesis shows, is that the majority of those with a serious mental illness cannot find work. People have no issue talking about an allergy, a bone fracture or a muscle sprain. We need people to feel as free to talk about being depressed or to be coping with bipolar disorder.

Recent research shows that a company's performance is enhanced when it shows it cares about the welfare of its employees and understands the impact that good working conditions have on the stress levels and well-being of its employees. Insurers now offer advice to their clients on enhancing workplace mental health. It's the right thing to do, it's the compassionate thing to do, and it's also good business. Not surprisingly, the companies that have been the most proactive in promoting mental health are also seen as the most desirable places in Canada to work.

This motion is an important statement for all Ontarians by the people whom they send to their Legislature to speak on their behalf, and I urge its support.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate? The Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you very much, Speaker, for giving me the opportunity speak on this very important motion. I want to congratulate the member from Oakville for bringing this matter forward.

The health and safety of Ontario workers is our number one priority. This includes mental health in the workplace. This is not only an important social issue, but

it is of key importance in ensuring productive workplaces and a growing and sustainable economy.

The new national standard on psychological health and safety in the workplace will help workplace parties to recognize mental health as a key dimension of a healthy workplace to support both social and economic goals.

The Ontario Ministry of Labour recognizes the value of employers and employees working together to develop strong workplace practices to create supportive work environments to help address mental stress and promote healthy living. In fact, on February 19, our government stated in its throne speech that it will continue to expand access to mental health services and support efforts to reduce stigma for men and women coping with mental illness. It also committed to working with partners in all related sectors to coordinate the best response to these challenges.

One area that's very important is around job-related post-traumatic mental stress, or PTSD. In September 2012, our government, through the Ministry of Labour, announced the launch of a round table to help workers who are faced with PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder. The round table supports our ministry's goal to encourage employers and employees to work together to develop strong workplace practices to reduce the risk of workers developing PTSD. The focus of the round table is to enable workplace parties to share approaches to deal with traumatic mental stress in the workplace through a multi-sectoral exchange. That round table is continuing with its work, which is extremely important.

Also, at the WSIB level, the board is providing compensation for traumatic mental stress when there is a clear link between the work and the injury or illness. Claims for PTSD are being adjudicated by a specialized team of case managers on a case-by-case basis, according to WSIB policy.

There is a fair amount of work that is going on, ensuring better mental health in the workplace, but of course we can do more. These are best practices that have been outlined which are part of the motion. It is extremely important that we ask our partners in the private sector to take those steps to make our workplaces healthy for everyone.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Oakville, you have two minutes.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** It is a pleasure to rise once again and to thank the members from Whitby-Oshawa, from Nickel Belt, from Oak Ridges, Chatham-Kent-Middlesex, Mississauga-Streetsville and Ottawa Centre for their kind comments. I believe that the motion looks like it has the support of at least those members who spoke today, and I sincerely hope that it does achieve its passage.

I wanted to thank Kimbalin Kelly from the CMHA Halton for turning out and supporting this today. From her work with CMHA Halton, she will tell you that employment is a major part of a person's recovery from mental illness.

I wanted to tell you what a few other people said to support what looks to be the pleasure of the House: that this motion pass.

This is from Jeff Moat, who's the president of Partners for Mental Health. He says, "When over half a million Canadians miss work each and every day because of mental health issues, the time has simply come to take action."

**1530**

Also, we have a quote here from the CEO of CMHA: "We envision and strive for an Ontario where mental health is recognized and promoted as a vital component of overall health, safety and wellness for all citizens, and the endorsement of this standard will be an encouraging step towards this vision."

Speaker, I think when corporations are faced with the option of doing something or not, they often view things as a cost. They often think, "Well, that's going to cost me money. Times are tough. I can't afford that money. We can't afford that money. The shareholders can't afford that money." The proof is overwhelming on this issue: Those employers that treat mental health with the seriousness it deserves, those employers that invest in mental health, are the most profitable companies. The employers that look after their human capital as well as their financial capital are the corporations in Ontario that are going to succeed.

By supporting this motion today, we help Ontario business and we help all Ontario citizens.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. We'll take the vote at the end of private members' public business.

#### FAIRNESS IS A TWO-WAY STREET ACT (CONSTRUCTION LABOUR MOBILITY), 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 PORTANT QUE LA JUSTICE N'EST PAS À SENS UNIQUE (MOBILITÉ DE LA MAIN-D'OEUVRE DANS L'INDUSTRIE DE LA CONSTRUCTION)

Mr. MacLaren moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 80, An Act respecting labour mobility in the construction industry aimed at restricting access to those taking advantage of Ontario's policy of free mobility /  
Projet de loi 80, Loi sur la mobilité de la main-d'oeuvre dans l'industrie de la construction visant à restreindre l'accès de ceux qui profitent de la politique de libre mobilité de l'Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** Mr. Speaker, I stand in the House today to speak in support of Bill 80, the Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act. This bill is in response to Quebec's unfair practice of effectively stopping Ontario construction contractors and workers from working in



Quebec by creating a mountain of red tape, permits, fees and harassing inspections and fines. Bill 80 will slam the door on Quebec construction contractors who want to bid on Ontario provincial and municipal government projects.

Our message to the Quebec government is this: If you are going to shut Ontario construction contractors out of Quebec, then we are going to shut Quebec construction contractors out of Ontario. Quebec's disdain for the common-law rights of Ontarians, specifically an individual's right to freely associate and participate in a free market, demands a provincial response.

Normally, Conservatives do not approve of the creation of protectionist interprovincial barriers which restrict labour mobility and trade—just the opposite. We prefer free markets and want barriers removed. We want open borders that would allow the free, unrestricted movement of construction contractors and workers between our two provinces. However, until the Quebec government comes to the negotiating table and true labour mobility is restored in practice, Bill 80 should be enacted and enforced. Our objective is to restore unfettered labour mobility in a competitive marketplace and ensure that Ontario construction companies and workers are treated fairly.

To understand why this bill is needed, let me tell you a few stories of how Quebec's unfair labour practices impact Ontario workers.

Walter Pamic is an Ottawa electrical contractor. He and his staff attempted to acquire the required permits that would allow him to bid on jobs in Gatineau, Quebec. After 30 or more hours of filling out forms, he and his staff threw up their hands in frustration and quit, because they didn't think they would ever be able to satisfy all the requirements of the application process. So Walter Pamic's company is not allowed to work in Quebec.

If Ontario dump truck drivers go into Quebec, they will be fined just because they have Ontario licence plates on their trucks. The Greater Ottawa Truckers Association represents hundreds of dump truck owner-operators who are short of work and desperately need the opportunity to bid on Quebec jobs if their businesses are to survive. These dump truck owners get very angry when they see Quebec dump trucks working in Ontario while they are not allowed to go to Quebec. It is not fair.

An Ontario man bought a new dump truck from a dealership in Quebec. The truck needed some warranty repair work done at the dealership in Quebec. He was told that he could not drive the truck to the Quebec dealership, but instead would have to load it onto a Quebec-licensed flatbed trailer and have it hauled to the Quebec dealership for the required work. That is absurd.

Here is another example: In order for Ontario truckers to deliver products sold to Quebec customers, they are required to apply and pay for a day permit for their truck stating what day they will be in Quebec, what bridges they will enter and exit Quebec from, what highways they will drive on, the address of every customer they will deliver to, and at what time they will leave Quebec. This is ridiculous.

Ontarians experience all these barriers to enter Quebec, yet when we look around Ontario, we see many Quebec contractors, workers and trucks. Although we do not object to Quebecers being in Ontario, because we believe in free markets, it is galling to Ontarians, because Quebec does not allow our workers into their province.

Bill 80, the Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act, is not new. It was passed into law in 1999, when it received support from MPPs from all three parties. It was then repealed by the McGuinty Liberal government in 2006, when the two provincial governments signed the Agreement on Labour Mobility and Recognition Of Qualifications, Skills and Work Experience in the Construction Industry. Ontario has abided by the intent of this agreement, and Quebec workers come into Ontario, as they should, but Quebec has not abided by the agreement, and Ontario workers are stopped from going to Quebec. So far, the Ontario Liberal government has refused to hold Quebec to account, and there has been no consequence to Quebec for this hurtful and unfair infraction. The Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act is the consequence.

To address the question of skilled labour shortages in Ottawa and the need for Quebec labour, let me explain. Section 2 of the act provides a special exemption for (a) Quebec workers who are working for an Ontario contractor, (b) Quebec workers whose specific skills are necessary to a specific project, and (c) Quebec workers who are needed in Ontario because of a shortage of skilled workers. These same exemptions were included in the original Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act of 1999.

We have strong support for this bill in eastern Ontario across the general public, from construction companies and their workers, and from numerous construction associations. The following associations expressed their support: the Greater Ottawa Truckers Association, the National Capital Heavy Construction Association, the Ontario Electrical League, and the Ottawa Sewer and Watermain Construction Association. I have letters of support here from all four of those organizations.

Leaders of municipal governments particularly support Bill 80. Mayor Philippe Barette of Témiscamingue, Quebec, supports Bill 80. He wants access to Ontario construction workers to service his town, because Quebec construction workers live three to four hours away from his municipality and are therefore very expensive for the people in his municipality to hire. I met with Nipissing MPP Vic Fedeli and Mayor Barette in Témiscamingue, at which time Mayor Barette expressed to the media his very real frustration with Quebec provincial government protectionism.

1540

At another media event at the Quebec border east of Cornwall, with both Jim McDonnell, MPP for Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry, and Ian McLeod, mayor of South Glengarry township, they expressed their disappointment with Quebec's protectionism. It is here that we witnessed first-hand Quebec delivery trucks coming into Ontario to make deliveries while Ontario trucks couldn't go there. It's not right, it's not fair and it has to stop.

Over the summer, I met with 17 of the city of Ottawa's 23 councillors and asked them to support the Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act. Almost all of those councillors were supportive of Bill 80. I found this to be a constructive collaboration between provincial and municipal politicians from different parties working together to help Ontario workers. It was politics as it should be.

When asked if he will support Bill 80, the Minister of Labour replied that he will wait for the five-year review of how the labour mobility agreement is working. The agreement was signed seven years ago and no review has ever been done or even requested. It would appear that we may be waiting a long time for this study to be done. The time for studying the problem is over. As a resident of Ottawa, all the minister has to do is talk to Ottawa contractors and workers and he will find out very quickly that there is a very real labour mobility problem.

How is it that the minister in charge of this portfolio is still unaware of the problem when everyone has been complaining about it for years? If your car has a flat tire, you don't study the problem; you fix the tire and get back on the road. Minister, it is time to get the labour mobility car back on the road.

Bill 80, the Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act of 2013, is exactly the same, word for word, as the Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act that was passed into law in 1999. The reason we need this bill passed today is exactly the same reason that it was passed in 1999: Quebec has created a mountain of red tape that effectively stops Ontario construction contractors and workers from working in Quebec.

In 1999, there was support from members of all three parties to pass the bill into law. Today, in 2013, we again need support from members of all three parties to pass this bill into law. It is the same bill to fix the same problem, and we need the same support from the same parties. I ask you, my colleagues in this historic House of government, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, to set aside party allegiances and do the right thing: Vote yes for Bill 80, Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act, to help Ontario construction contractors and workers get back to work. These workers are asking for our help, and they deserve our support. It is the right thing to do now, just as it was in 1999.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I'm pleased to rise today on behalf of our party to speak to Bill 80, entitled Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act.

New Democrats understand that there continue to be irritants regarding construction mobility between Quebec and Ontario. We also understand that this government urgently needs to increase assistance to small contractors who continue to encounter frustrations in dealing with the paperwork required to obtain work in Quebec. However, this bill is not the answer and would only make things worse.

It is opposed by all major eastern Ontario construction stakeholders on both the employer and union sides. For

example, both the Ottawa Construction Association, representing the contractors, and the Eastern Ontario and Western Quebec Building Trades Council, have been very outspoken on their opposition to this bill. They believe, as do New Democrats, that the passage of this bill would wipe out significant gains over the past few years by all major construction stakeholders and believe that it is better to work out the remaining barriers through the Jobs Protection Office and other programs such as Head Start.

There has been significant progress regarding labour mobility between Ontario and Quebec in the construction sector since the Labour Mobility Act was passed in 2006 and the Jobs Protection Office and complimentary measures were put in place.

Major stakeholders are particularly supportive of the Head Start program that was created in 2009 to assist Ontario workers to satisfy Quebec credentials and to direct Ontario contractors through the Quebec requirements for compliance to obtain work in Quebec.

In addition, on September 11, 2009, a trade and co-operation agreement between Ontario and Quebec that included the 2006 labour mobility agreement was signed. According to both employers and union groups, this agreement added clarity to issues like transportation, public procurement, regulation, economy, energy, co-operation and dispute resolutions. The above issues are precisely the issues Bill 80 is supposed to solve but does not.

For background on this bill, Bill 80, the Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act, is based on a statute that was originally passed in 1999 and repealed in 2006 when the Labour Mobility Act was passed by the present government. So it only applies to the construction sector. In the 1990s there were some Quebec laws that made it difficult for Ontario-owned construction companies and Ontario tradespeople to work in Quebec. The 1999 act retaliated against those certain laws in Quebec by placing similar restrictions on Quebec tradespeople and Quebec-based companies seeking work in Ontario. The 1990 bill carried on a voice vote on May 4, and it seems, at that time, all parties supported it.

But in the 1990s, the labour market in the construction industry in Quebec was highly regulated and highly unionized. In addition, the province of Quebec had formal and informal policies that favoured Quebec-based contractors when awarding large infrastructure projects; for example, Hydro-Québec essentially restricted the awarding of contracts to Quebec-owned firms. Skilled tradespersons from Ontario found it difficult to work in Quebec at least in part because of the strict limits on what trades could perform such work. Ontario workers found it difficult to join locals even in the same union.

From Quebec's perspective, the 1990s restrictions were justified. More Quebec union members felt that Ontario firms were only competitive because they paid their workers lower wages. They also believed that Ontario firms often ignored Quebec's strong occupational health and safety laws. However, it is also true that when



construction jobs were not available in Quebec, many unionized labourers sought non-union jobs in eastern Ontario.

Although the Ontario and Quebec governments reached an agreement in 1996 to allow more labour mobility, by 1998 it was clear that the situation had not improved. Unemployment in Ontario's construction industry was higher than the province's average as a whole. The Mike Harris government at the time passed the Fairness in a Two-Way Street Act in 1999, which had the following restrictions: that no Ontario government contract could be awarded to a firm that was based in a restricted province, although the only such province defined under those regulations passed at that time was Quebec. This applied not only to provincial government but municipal boards, municipal governments, school boards and government enterprises such as Hydro One. The law also applied to the subcontractors of the bidders.

Although the legislation was passed in 1999, this was largely an attempt to force Quebec back to the bargaining table. However the situation continued to worsen and the act came into effect in 2002.

There have been some real impacts of that original legislation. According to major eastern Ontario construction stakeholders, the 1999 act had a limited effect on construction mobility, although the situation did not grow any worse. Many Quebec companies that hired large numbers of Ontario workers, such as SNC-Lavalin, were unintentionally restricted from bidding for contracts and had to be exempted from the effect of the act. In addition, most Quebec companies of sufficient size set up an Ontario company in order to comply with the new law, which put most of the burden on smaller companies that could not afford to have a dual presence in both provinces.

The situation following the Labour Mobility Act of 2006—again, Bill 80 seeks to revive the Harris-era labour bill that was repealed and replaced by the Ontario-Quebec labour mobility agreement in 2006. It was replaced after years of escalating trade disputes, even after 2002, that resulted in Ontario construction workers being unfairly barred from Quebec construction projects, without clear dispute resolution mechanisms.

1550

According to major construction associations and building trade unions, the 2006 labour mobility agreement not only helped reopen the Quebec border to Ontario tradespeople, but it also created the Jobs Protection Office to represent Ontario tradespeople working in Quebec. Obviously, as I mentioned before, it was followed by the Head Start program in 2009 to assist Ontario workers to satisfy Quebec credentials.

I could go on at length about the nature of this bill. Suffice it to say, we understand that the different jurisdictions in this province, when it comes to labour mobility, are complicated. Going from Ontario to Quebec certainly poses a whole host of issues. As a former construction worker, although I've never worked in Quebec, I certainly know fellow colleagues who have

worked in Quebec and understand that it is difficult and poses some problems, specifically if that is a new, I guess, venture for a small contractor.

Similarly, there are difficulties entering into other jurisdictions, such as Alberta. There are several firms in southwestern Ontario that are looking to increase their presence into the province of Alberta and often need some assistance through intergovernmental programs to find their feet, so to speak.

What I think is happening here is that we have a small subset of contractors who certainly don't have the ability to enter into that market in a real, tangible way. They see an opportunity but yet, for whatever reason, are precluded or excluded from being able to enter into contracts and bidding on those jobs as other larger firms would be.

I understand that frustration. It certainly makes sense for us to make overtures to those smaller firms to see if there can be assistance provided through, as I stated here, the Head Start program that does facilitate some of the legislative requirements there.

However, this bill here poses, really, the nuclear option from our standpoint. We see that it definitely will put a wall up between the province of Ontario and Quebec and shut out really any progress that has been made for workers and contractors who have developed and worked through the differences in legislation and differences in code and in processes. In terms of construction work, that presented barriers in the past.

I certainly was not privy to those initial discussions and those initial tensions between the province of Ontario and the province of Quebec. I can only feel that at that time, when these bills were being introduced, there were larger implications and larger problems that were sort of on the surface of what the bill is attempting to do here today; some issues that had national ramifications, issues that have been dealt with, thankfully, since then. And I think we're making progress still, to work with the province of Quebec and other jurisdictions to ensure the free flow of labour, but it's an ongoing process. It's an evolutionary process and one that I think this bill certainly doesn't assist in.

This one puts the brakes through any co-operation, any sense of working together, any sense that we can be complimentary in our jurisdictions and actually find opportunities for firms on both sides of the interprovincial border to work together, one that our party has clearly indicated doesn't address the need of those firms that actually do require the assistance and can use the assistance. This simply builds up a massive interjurisdictional wall for labour to move freely.

With that said, Mr. Speaker, I think that you can sense, and members of the House can sense, that New Democrats stand opposed to Bill 80. We do understand that there will be an ongoing need for us, as a Legislature, to identify areas where we can assist in ensuring that our construction workers and companies can cross into Quebec and facilitate the work that they do, as well as ensuring that Quebec workers can come over here and assist in our provincial affairs and our provincial

construction projects that they may be specialized in. Of course, we know that there are certainly some great firms out of Quebec that do some wonderful work. Let's not build up trade barrier walls and labour mobility walls that certainly don't need to be put into place. We can have a clear conscience on this, we can have a clear vision, but this certainly is not a bill that will allow us to get there.

Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the time given today.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate? The Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you very much, Speaker, for recognizing me to speak on this matter.

I do want to start first by thanking the member from Carleton-Mississippi Mills for bringing this bill. I know he's been working hard on this matter. He and I have had conversations about this bill as well. As much as we don't agree on the merit of the bill and we disagree as to the impact of the bill, I do want to thank him for the work he has done. I also want to thank the member from Essex for his comments. A lot of points that I wanted to raise he made quite eloquently, so thanks to the member from Essex for his wisdom on this issue.

I think, Speaker, all members in the House—the intention of the member from Carleton-Mississippi Mills as well—desire to create more jobs for Ontarians. I think we share that goal. I think where we part our ways is the way in which it's trying to be accomplished through this legislation.

We, as the government, are of the view that this bill is going to kill jobs, this bill is going to undermine the great work that has been done in terms of building infrastructure in Ontario as opposed to the other way around. This is not the way to ensure that we have more jobs being created in Ontario. Building walls, building trade barriers within Canada to an important province like Quebec, which is next door—or anybody internationally through other countries—is not how we grow an economy. I think that is a fundamental difference between us and the Conservatives in this particular regard. This is the wrong approach.

This bill, as the sponsoring member himself acknowledged, was brought forward for the first time 14 years ago by the Harris-Hudak government. Now, I don't understand, if this bill did not work 14 years ago, how is it going to work today and help issues? I think what we have accomplished through the labour mobility agreement of 2006, and then further enhancements that were made in 2011, has resulted in significant improvement in the relationship, has resulted in significant labour mobility between the two provinces.

There were some serious challenges with the bill back in 1999. There were numerous exemptions that were created in that bill because it caused a lot of problems, notably exemptions of many large companies based out of Quebec that do a lot of work in Ontario, build infrastructure and create jobs—companies like Dufferin Construction Co., Lafarge Canada Inc. or SNC-Lavalin, for instance, just three big companies.

I want to note that SNC-Lavalin right now has the contract in Ottawa to build the light rail system. It's a \$2.1-billion project; \$600 million of that funding is coming from the province of Ontario. We will seriously jeopardize those kind of projects, not to mention the thousands of jobs that particular project is going to create in the Ottawa area for both Ottawa contractors and Ottawa workers. There was also a legal challenge that took place, back in early 2000, against the city of Ottawa because of this particular bill that was existing as a law, and the city lost that legal case, all highlighting that there are some significant challenges associated with this particular bill and it's not going to really help in making sure that we enhance labour mobility.

**1600**

I do want to mention many key players in the construction sector in Ottawa that are against this bill. One of the largest associations is the Ottawa Construction Association, which represents contractors in our area. They have been very much opposed to this bill. Their president, John DeVries, actually wrote a column entitled "Let's Not Bring Back Fairness is a Two-Way Street." He gives many reasons in that article, but mentions that bringing back Fairness is a Two-Way Street is not a solution supported by the Ottawa Construction Association. Similarly, the Greater Ottawa Home Builders' Association, which represents many developers in the city of Ottawa, is not supportive of the bill.

But there have been a lot of benefits for Ontario companies and Ontario workers due to the bill. For example, the Mechanical Contractors Association of Ottawa informs me that there are eight Ottawa-based companies that are doing work on the Quebec side worth about \$150 million as we speak. That's very significant, because they are using both Ontario- and Quebec-qualified skilled trades to successfully complete these projects—\$150 million of work that is being done by companies in Ottawa on the Quebec side.

Similarly, if you talk to the elevator contractors in Ottawa, they will tell you that the majority of the work that has been done in terms of maintaining elevators and escalators on the Quebec side, in Gatineau, is being done by companies that are located in Ottawa and by workers that live on the Ontario side.

Lastly, I recently found out that the bricklayers, for example, under Local 7 of the building trades, have performed, in 2012 alone, about 107,000 hours of work on the Quebec side. That's just in one year of Ontario bricklayers doing work on the Quebec side. That, I think, highlights very significantly the kind of positive impact on our economy that we have been having in Ontario as a result of the labour mobility agreement.

The city of Ottawa is not supportive of this bill. In fact, the member opposite who brought this bill tried to convince the city to endorse, through a motion, this particular bill, and the council refused to do so. They want to enhance further the labour mobility. In fact, the mayor of Ottawa—a former member of this Legislature,



Jim Watson—had written to Mr. MacLaren indicating that the city does not support this bill because it does not correct the concerns about worker mobility. In fact, he said, “I could not support your private member’s bill because it would not improve the situation for workers in Ottawa.”

Not to mention, lastly, the building trades in Ottawa, who have been very pleased by the labour mobility agreement because it has given opportunities for skilled-trades workers on the Ottawa side to be able to work on the Quebec side. In one of their statements recently, the building trades mentioned that, “Bill 80 would kill jobs and eliminate future opportunities by placing a wall at the border and blocking Ontario workers from working in Quebec and/or Quebec firms from doing work in Ontario. That is why we are calling on all MPPs to stand up and oppose this devastating bill.”

I think these are all valid points, and it is important that we heed this advice. I do want to acknowledge, though, the presence of Mr. Ron Barr from the Greater Ottawa Truckers Association. Mr. Barr and I have had the opportunity to meet and to talk about some of the concerns that the truckers and haulers have felt in our area. I have given him my commitment to work with him to see how we can find those solutions that will help his members to be able to access and do more work. I look forward to that opportunity.

Lastly, I will just encourage all members to vote against this bill, because this is not how we are going to create jobs in Ontario. We need to continue to enhance labour mobility between the two provinces and to develop and build our economy.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** It’s a pleasure to be able to speak today in support of Bill 80, the Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act. My riding of Nipissing borders the province of Quebec. I have seen first-hand the inequity the member from Carleton-Mississippi Mills is addressing here and the negative consequences it has for residents on both sides of the Ottawa River. I’ll be giving a specific example very shortly.

Barrier-free trade is a cornerstone of the economy. The ability for workers and contractors to operate across provincial borders is essential.

Ontario and Quebec have the busiest border trade in Canada, representing a quarter of all of this country’s interprovincial trade. Construction labour is a key part of this relationship. But right now, there is an unlevel playing field. Quebec is not living up to interprovincial agreements that are supposed to guarantee free movement between Quebec and Ontario for construction workers and contractors, whereas Ontario is living up to the open-door, open-border policy.

Over the past 20 years, there have been five agreements on labour mobility signed between Ontario and Quebec, all of which have been ignored by Quebec. This means Quebec construction contractors and workers have been able to easily work in Ontario. They undercut

Ontario’s bidding prices for work because they don’t pay Ontario WSIB premiums and retail sales tax. Ontario contractors and workers cannot work in Quebec due to mountains of red tape, redundant accreditation and harassment from provincial enforcement officers. This is unfair and has gone on for too long.

Let me give you an example. The former president of Tembec, a 1,000-employee company in the small community of Témiscaming, Quebec, about 45 miles from my home in North Bay, was telling me a story one day. On Christmas Day, his natural gas furnace went on the fritz. He called the contractor in North Bay, the closest community to Témiscaming, Quebec, and said, “I know it’s Christmas Day. I need you here.” The guy said, “Yes, of course, I’ll be there. Where are you?” “Well, I’m in Témiscaming.” “I can’t come. I can’t work in Témiscaming, Quebec. I can’t get the accreditation. I will not pay the tens of thousands of dollars of fees that I need to pay just to cross the border to fix your furnace.”

Now, this is in the dead of winter. He had to wait four days till a Quebec contractor from another community quite far away—three hours away—was able to come in. Four days in the winter with no heat in their home because of this law. That is why Témiscaming, Quebec, Mayor Philippe Barrette stood up, not only for Quebec but for Ontario. He says this bill is driving costs up. When that contractor four hours away does get the call to come into Témiscaming, the rates have skyrocketed. That’s a great example I want you to think about. Just think about what you’re doing to Ontario. Supporting this bill creates jobs and supports the economy of Ontario. Not to support this continues to hurt the 600,000 men and women who woke up this morning without a job that you’re not helping.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I grew up on a farm just a couple of kilometres inside the Ontario border, so I’ve witnessed the number of Quebec workers and contractors working in our area, and I’ve heard from and know many of the private plumbers, carpenters, electricians, contractors and more from my area who are not allowed to work across the border in Quebec. It’s not fair, and it’s not right.

A friend tells me of a house that’s being built today in Lancaster, a little town about seven miles from the border—we hear the government talking about how things have changed—not an Ontario licence plate to be found in the yard. Not only that; the supplies all come from Quebec, the cement trucks all come from Quebec. There’s no requirement in Ontario for these companies to collect sales tax, so this is tax revenue that we’re not getting. So there’s a 13% advantage before we even start. This is a huge disadvantage for Ontario contractors and suppliers who are trying to make a living in a border town. Those who have attempted to license their vehicles and businesses to allow them to work inside Quebec are hit with a huge wall of regulation, red tape and harassment when they try to cross the border.

We talk about small companies. I worked for a small company—Bell Canada. We had all the licensing needed

to cross the border, but the word was, when they had the inspection across the bridge, we didn't cross—we had an area of Grenville across from Hawkesbury that we looked after—because they seized the vehicles and you lost a day's work. I remember talking to one of our administrators in Toronto who set the licence up. He was furious. He said, "You know, I could travel to New Orleans a lot easier than I could travel to Montreal to get one of our trucks fixed."

That's just the way it is in this province. They will not work by the rules. It's a huge disadvantage for people. I know that the largest companies can get work, when there is a shortage in Quebec, but the rest of us can't.

Construction and paving companies in my area in Cornwall cannot cross the border into Quebec to deliver their concrete or building supplies, but the opposite is not true. It's not the way we want to be in Ontario, it's not the way it should be, but it's the way it is.

1610

A friend of mine—a local electrician who this government actually put out of business after 50 years of work because of his master electrician's licence—was delivering his daughter to McGill, her residence. His truck is seized because his name is on the door, and he's fined. That's what goes on. He's not even working in Quebec, but that's what happens.

I think it's time that we make these changes and fix what's happening here. I commend our member from Carleton-Mississippi Mills for the bill and look forward to voting for it.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to say a few words in support of Bill 80, the Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act, which has been brought forward, of course, by our esteemed colleague the member from Carleton-Mississippi Mills.

The purpose of this bill, of course, is to deal with the significant labour mobility issue between Ontario and Quebec whereby Ontario workers and businesses are effectively prohibited from working in Quebec while the opposite is true for Quebec workers and businesses in Ontario.

With over 600,000 people out of work in Ontario today, it really is important to create a level playing field and opportunities for Ontario businesses and workers. I really don't understand why both the government and the third party in this kind of a context aren't standing up for Ontario and supporting this bill. They certainly did in 1999 when it was originally introduced. In fact, it did receive all-party support at that time.

I have to say I have a bit of a personal interest in this bill because it was originally introduced in this Legislature on April 28, 1999, by my predecessor and somebody I know pretty well: Jim Flaherty, who was then the Minister of Labour. When this was originally introduced, he noted at the time that this was already a 30-year problem. Now it's getting closer to a 45-year

problem, and it still hasn't been addressed, notwithstanding other labour mobility agreements that are simply not working.

I would just like to quote one thing that Mr. Flaherty commented on in his speech. He said:

"I would rather not have to introduce this bill. Our clear preference is free labour mobility and open borders. We believe that free trade and labour mobility are vital to the economic growth of both Ontario and Quebec.

"That's why I urge the Quebec government to act now to create a level playing field. That way we can dismantle the barriers we've been forced to erect and both provinces can start enjoying the benefits of free trade and open borders."

Certainly that's our preference as well, but we're clearly not getting the attention of the Quebec government. It's simply time to stand up for Ontario workers and businesses, and I would urge the other parties in this Legislature to do the same.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** You know, it's interesting that you quote Minister Flaherty, because he's done some very good things. Right now, the HST has reduced business costs in Ontario by about \$8.5 billion in the last year and is one of the significant factors—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** It's actually your federal Conservative Party that said that. I'm quoting the federal finance minister: \$8.5 billion in reduced business costs in Ontario alone from the HST. That contributed significantly to the 163% job recovery here in Ontario and the general uplift in the country. That is a view that the Liberal Party and the federal Conservative Party have actually agreed on, and that tax reform was quite dynamic.

The other piece where I also agree with Mr. Flaherty—and I have said many times in this House in a very non-partisan way that he is one of the best finance ministers this country has had, and his leadership role internationally has been very important.

*Applause.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I'm glad the members opposite are clapping, because life in this House would be so much better if they shared the view of Minister Sousa and Minister Flaherty, and Mr. Fedeli would join and make it a trio; we would get a lot more co-operation. But then you didn't support the HST. Had we followed you, I think the estimates are that we'd probably have a couple of hundred thousand fewer jobs in Ontario right now, if we and the federal government—in fact, our job recovery would be as much as 30% less.

So if you can't take it from us, because it's a little humiliating, maybe you could just follow your federal party's finance minister, because we seem to be getting along better with him than you do sometimes.

The second piece that is really important in trade, Mr. Speaker—and I know my friend Minister Duguid and I have spent a lot of time working on labour training and



share some passion for this. We'll tell you that one of the other things Mr. Flaherty did, which I was very aware of and this government was very supportive of and has taken similar steps, was to reduce the taxes on unassembled parts coming into Ontario to accelerate manufacturing and assembly. That is one of the reasons that our manufacturing sector is doing very well. As you know, there's a challenge there because we're making more automobiles than we ever have before because of that. Now the challenge is, what were those unassembled parts, Mr. Speaker? Those unassembled parts were modern automotive robotics that have made our automobile plants some of the most productive in the world.

It would be nice to have a sophisticated debate here. I listened very carefully to give you some feedback, and if you want to debate me, having an elevated debate on substance here every once in a while isn't a bad thing. The opposition party has made this point, that somehow there's a problem in the auto sector because we have less people making more cars or producing more cars, and it employs fewer people. The Conservative Party position provincially is the opposite of their counterparts federally. Their federal government counterparts point out, as we do, that the auto sector in Ontario is the strongest that it ever has been and that it is that automation—it was those tax changes that actually allowed the plants to be more competitive and produce more cars with fewer input, which is why—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. Further debate?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Am I finished?

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Yes. Further debate?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It's a pleasure to speak on this bill today. Let me begin by starting out with what my colleague said in the first place and what Mr. Flaherty said in 1999. We'd rather not be doing this, but agreement after agreement after agreement that has been reached by this province and Quebec has failed to be honoured by the province of Quebec because they look for loopholes in which to place new restrictions on mobility of labour coming across from the province of Ontario.

You're left with one action. When we're continually disadvantaged, you have to take strong action. That's something that I know this government is not used to doing. It's not in their DNA. They like to namby-pamby around the issue to the detriment of Ontario and they would rather stand up for Quebec workers than they would stand up for Ontario workers.

Every once in a while, Speaker, when the bully has had his free run in the schoolyard and people try to say to the bully, "What you're doing is wrong. You need to stop doing what you're doing," you know what happens? The bully keeps doing it. But I'll tell you what stops the bully. It's when somebody stands up to him and punches him in the nose. He gets it. He figures it out.

If this bill passes, at least then we're saying in the province of Ontario that we're serious about this issue;

we actually care; that we're going to do something to try to level the playing field between our province and the province of Quebec. This is not about being against workers in the province of Quebec. This is about supporting workers in the province of Ontario.

I say to the Premier, if you don't want to support this act, well maybe you need to start doing something to make it easier for Ontario workers to get work in the province of Quebec. The next time you go to one of your so-called Premiers' conferences—you know, those three- or four-day shindigs—I'm going to tell you, maybe you need to stop berating and crying for Stephen Harper to fix the problems that you've created by your financial mismanagement in Ontario and maybe you need to sit down with your provincial counterparts and work out real mobility legislation that works.

In the absence of that, I would urge all the members on the other side of the House, are you going to make your choice? Are you going to stand up for Ontario or are you going to continue to sit on your hands when the interests of Ontario and its workers are at stake? You have your choice today, and I urge every member on the other side to stand with us in the PC caucus, to stand with us in eastern Ontario and to stand with Ontario workers. I know it's foreign to you to do that on the Liberal side. And the stuff that I heard from the NDP was just rich. It's time to stand up for Ontario workers. You have your opportunity today.

1620

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Carleton—Mississippi Mills, you have two minutes for a response.

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank my colleagues in the House who commented on our bill: Essex, Ottawa Centre, Toronto Centre, Nipissing, Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, Whitby—Oshawa, and Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke. I would like to say that the last four seemed to have a pretty firm grasp that we do have a problem and that we need to fix it, so I'd like to thank them for their words.

Recently, Premier Wynne stated, "There are issues that we agree on, issues that are non-partisan, and we should be able to move ahead on those." Bill 80, Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act, is completely non-partisan. Demanding fairness for Ontario workers is not a partisan issue. It is the right thing to do.

Ontario construction workers are asking for our help. This is the job of elected representatives: to defend our citizens against bullies. Ontario construction workers, contractors and truck drivers are asking us, their elected representatives, to vote yes to Bill 80. It is time once again to pressure the Quebec provincial government to put a stop to their bully tactics and level the playing field for Ontario workers.

Given Ontario's stumbling economy and high unemployment, this bill is not only non-partisan, it is a no-brainer.

Passing this legislation will send a clear message to the electorate that when Ontario citizens face an outside threat, the parties will unite to defend them.

Vote yes to Bill 80 and send that clear message to the people of Ontario and the people of Quebec that we support Ontario workers.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Sit down, please.

The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

## RADON AWARENESS AND PREVENTION ACT, 2013

### LOI DE 2013 SUR LA SENSIBILISATION AU RADON ET LA PROTECTION CONTRE L'INFILTRATION DE CE GAZ

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** We will first deal with ballot item number 34, standing in the name of Mr. Qaadri.

Mr. Qaadri has moved second reading of Bill 96, An Act to raise awareness about radon, provide for the Ontario Radon Registry and reduce radon levels in dwellings and workplaces.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** I request that the bill be sent to the Standing Committee on General Government.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Qaadri has requested that the bill be referred to general government. Agreed? Agreed.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Flynn has moved private member's notice of motion number 41. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

## FAIRNESS IS A TWO-WAY STREET ACT (CONSTRUCTION LABOUR MOBILITY), 2013

### LOI DE 2013 PORTANT QUE LA JUSTICE N'EST PAS À SENS UNIQUE (MOBILITÉ DE LA MAIN-D'OEUVRE DANS L'INDUSTRIE DE LA CONSTRUCTION)

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. MacLaren has moved second reading of Bill 80, An Act respecting labour mobility in the construction industry aimed at restricting access to those taking advantage of Ontario's policy of free mobility.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I hear a no.

All those in favour of the motion, please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.  
*The division bells rang from 1624 to 1629.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Can members please take their seats?

All those in favour, please rise and remain standing.

## Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Holyday, Douglas C.	Nicholls, Rick
Bailey, Robert	Hudak, Tim	O'Toole, John
Hudleigh, Ted	Leone, Rob	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Clark, Steve	MacLaren, Jack	Pettapiece, Randy
Colle, Mike	MacLeod, Lisa	Thompson, Lisa M.
Elliott, Christine	McDonnell, Jim	Wilson, Jim
Fedeli, Victor	McKenna, Jane	Yakubuski, John
Hardeman, Ernie	Milligan, Rob E.	
Harris, Michael	Munro, Julia	

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** All those opposed, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

## Nays

Albanese, Laura	Fraser, John	Naqvi, Yasir
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Hoskins, Eric	Natyshak, Taras
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hunter, Mitzie	Piruzza, Teresa
Campbell, Sarah	Jaczek, Helena	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chan, Michael	Kwinter, Monte	Sandals, Liz
Chiarelli, Bob	MacCharles, Tracy	Sattler, Peggy
Coteau, Michael	Mangat, Amrit	Schein, Jonah
Damerla, Dipika	Marchese, Rosario	Sergio, Mario
Del Duca, Steven	Mauro, Bill	Singh, Jagmeet
Delaney, Bob	McMeekin, Ted	Tabuns, Peter
Dhillon, Vic	McNeely, Phil	Taylor, Monique
DiNovo, Cheri	Miller, Paul	Wong, Soo
Duguid, Brad	Millroy, John	Zimmer, David
Fife, Catherine	Moridi, Reza	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Murray, Glen R.	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 25; the nays are 43.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I declare the motion lost.

*Second reading negated.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### WIRELESS SERVICES AGREEMENTS ACT, 2013

### LOI DE 2013 SUR LES CONVENTIONS DE SERVICES SANS FIL

Resuming the debate adjourned on September 10, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 60, An Act to strengthen consumer protection with respect to consumer agreements relating to wireless services accessed from a cellular phone, smart phone or any other similar mobile device / *Projet de loi 60, Loi visant à mieux protéger les consommateurs en ce qui concerne les conventions de consommation portant sur les services sans fil accessibles au moyen d'un téléphone cellulaire, d'un téléphone intelligent ou de tout autre appareil mobile semblable.*



**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** The Ontario PCs have been at the forefront of consumer protection ever since the 1960s. The current Consumer Protection Act was passed by our leader, Tim Hudak, in 2002. We are always open to discussing consumer protection.

With over three quarters of Ontarians having a mobile phone, any legislation that affects the wireless industry actually affects millions. However, the most influential regulations in the wireless industry, such as roaming charges, must originate federally. The CRTC has acted, and the new code will be in place soon. All the bill's provisions are in the national code, and the CRTC even went further.

The CRTC code gives consumers a better deal on cancellations of contracts with a subsidized device, because it makes your device depreciate over two years rather than Bill 60's four. The CRTC caps roaming charges at \$100 unless the consumer demands otherwise. The provincial legislation can't order that. The CRTC caps over-usage charges at \$50, which this bill doesn't do. Cell shock is the very reason for this bill's existence, and it fails to address it.

The CRTC addresses the growing market of prepaid phone plans, which Bill 60 ignores. The CRTC adopts the same approach as Bill 60 for lost and stolen phones and for phones handed in for repair. The CRTC orders companies to disclose their complaints.

The CRTC establishes a duty for companies to make consumers aware of the need to monitor their voice, text and data usage. Bill 60 doesn't do that. Bill 60 would, eventually, maybe, order companies to have early warning systems for over-usage charges when the technology is right.

Back in May 2012, I cautioned the government that they shouldn't fix what there's an app for. There are a number of free and cheap apps for all phone operating systems that track your voice, data and text usage and can even give you a warning if your carrier doesn't already do so.

Bill 60 is redundant. We agree with the principle behind it, but all the action items have been addressed already by the CRTC. The only visible difference is Bill 60's mandatory disclosure of whether the phone has been refurbished. Wireless ads already disclose this, and it's a standard within the industry. Although it's not mandated, the companies are already doing it. So are refurbished phones what we're really talking about?

These principles apply across many industries, not just the wireless, and if the minister truly cared about Ontario's consumers, she would drop Bill 60 and submit a broader, more encompassing act covering all of the issues. We can't add other industries in in a committee because the amendments would be out of order. They aren't in the spirit of the original bill.

The prominence of the all-in price in advertising is, of course, an important issue for consumers, and the CRTC addresses all-in pricing at the point of sale. We are

willing to discuss this principle for advertising, but why just for wireless? Car manufacturers can advertise low prices without the dealer fees, and the dealers are on the receiving end of customer anger because of the inevitable extra costs.

The minister should drop what is now an obsolete bill and focus on the broader principles of what she still advocates for: an all-in pricing act. We can discuss that: broad, all-encompassing equipment condition disclosure act. We can talk about that as well.

I branded the bill's predecessor, Bill 82, the me-too act. The government has been seeing other provinces take the legislation of the wireless and wanted to join the club. At that time, we did not have the CRTC regulations code in effect. There was a need for it. Although this bill was finally introduced just, I guess, weeks before the federal bill, it certainly has made it redundant.

Complaints about wireless companies are almost a national pastime, so obviously a wireless bill gets good press. This bill has lost its meaning because it is trumped in its entirety by the CRTC code. However, it's a good earner of column inches in the press, and I guess that's what we're seeing, because we have a government here that has no plan for jobs, no plan for the economy, so they're trying to change the channel.

Bill 82 was called when there were rumours of an election. Bill 60 was submitted just weeks before the CRTC unveiled its national code in order to capture the last PR opportunities. Now the Premier won't rule out a fall election, and likewise, we see Bill 60 come before us again.

The government sat on its hands for four years and wasted several opportunities to pass wireless legislation. They're trying to play catch-up with a level of government it cannot reach. The wireless train has left the station. This is the fourth bill in four years, so there has been much opportunity to pass this.

We could be discussing non-profit corporations across Ontario, providing essential services to our communities. They are waiting with bated breath to see Bill 85 through. It is in this minister's portfolio, and its passage is quite important in view of the 2014 proclamation of the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act.

**1640**

We could be discussing the collection of interprovincial fines, Bill 34, but we aren't. We could be taking action to prevent a repeat of the Toronto G20, where the government passed a secret regulation and then abandoned its duty to co-ordinate law enforcement during the event, leading to the largest mass arrest in Canadian history. We could be acting for free speech and open debate by discussing the Protection of Public Participation Act, Bill 83, which would ban lawsuits designed entirely to intimidate the plaintiff's critics with the prospect of high defence costs. We could also be focusing on job creation, encouraging businesses to set up in Ontario. We could be taking action for substantial pensions, modernizing our labour system and many more issues that I've heard about from my constituents over

the summer. Instead, the government insists on plain publicity-seeking.

Just a few points on the latest CRTC code that was issued in June of this year: The minister commented in Tuesday's debate to the effect that the CRTC is "a voluntary sort of thing" is incorrect. The CRTC code is mandatory. The minister's suggestion that the industry is challenging the CRTC code in court is also incorrect. A suit has been filed to seek clarity on whether it applies to contracts signed before December 2, 2013. Nobody is challenging the code's applications to all wireless contracts signed in Canada after December 2, 2013. They only want total clarity on whether it's retroactive.

The minister is incorrect in her suggestion that there are no penalties or remedies for breaching the CRTC code. The code is enforced by the Commissioner for Complaints for Telecommunications Services. The commissioner can award costs and penalties for breaches of the code or any other issue they investigate, and they have done so in the past, numerous times. This is compared to the Ministry of Consumer Services, which has been shown by the Auditor General of Ontario to have a lack of meaningful enforcement tools.

It's sad to say that this bill is now almost completely irrelevant. The CRTC code is very clear that it takes precedence over any provincial consumer legislation or regulations targeting the wireless industry. Unless the government is prepared to challenge the federal jurisdiction over telecommunications, the bill is no longer required. So why are we here rushing through Bill 80 after the fact? This is the fourth time this bill has been introduced—once during the days of the Liberal majority government, when they could have taken action on this government bill and breezed it through the House. After all, it had all-party support. So why now, with so many priorities on the table?

We see in this province that we have 600,000 people looking for work. We have an economy that's sluggish, and consumers worried about their jobs being there next month. We have accountability issues. We have many issues to deal with in this province, and we see a list of bills being introduced over the next few months that really don't attack the real issues that I believe the residents of my riding and certainly across the province are looking for. They're looking for something that will get this economy back working and people back to work.

Accountability: This seems to be all about changing the page. We have all kinds of scandals in this government. We have the gas plants' cost. We still don't know that. We have the Auditor General's report coming out in a few weeks. But we all know that the government has that report. Why aren't we hearing just what that is now? Why do we have to wait for more—I mean, we've seen over the last two years since I've been here every effort taken to make sure that we don't get the true costs. First of all, there were efforts made even through the first by-elections to try to get back to a majority Parliament so that they could rule these out of order, these questions. I know they're embarrassing questions, but they're

questions that under a majority system—the House has a right to know. The House always has a right to know. But the opposition in a minority government has the ability to request those. We have the deletion of emails that we're still talking about.

Priorities: We really wonder about the need for this legislation before us. Issues: the resignations that have gone through this government. Clearly this is a government that's in trouble and wants to see the channel changed.

Then we hear about the Green Energy Act and the issues with that. Constituents are calling my office; they can't afford to live in this province anymore. They're sitting there on pensions. They haven't seen increases over the last number of years. Certainly the 1% increases, which is typical of the people that are lucky to have an indexed pension, is not cutting it anymore. You're seeing power bills go up 100%. How can we expect that they can keep up with a pension that is actually frozen?

We see the industrial rate in Ontario, the average industrial rate, double that of our Quebec and our US neighbours, in Michigan and actually in Manitoba. How do you expect our companies to be able to compete when our power rates are so much higher? Now we had the realization just this week that they're having so much trouble and spending so much money selling and trying to get rid of our surplus power that they're actually paying the wind suppliers not to produce electricity. I guess they do that and are hoping that nobody will notice. But obviously, wind power is unpredictable. They've had to build other facilities, gas plants to look after that power, because unfortunately, if we go back to yesterday, which was one of the hottest days in September in the history of this province, there was no wind. It's interesting to note that when there's no wind, there's no power. So it's unpredictable and can't be counted on. I don't think they want to go back to the public and every day in the summertime—peak times—during the day when there's no wind, shut the power down, saying, "Well, sorry, folks. We're relying on wind power. Unfortunately, there is no power right now." So you can imagine the government paying so much for their touted wind products that they actually ask them not to produce it.

Then we have the \$1 billion in inefficiency added to our hydro bills every year that we're paying for. The spilling of water over the dams—\$300 million per year; \$500 million per year is what we're paying our neighbours to take the power. Now we have to add on, of course, the cost of power that we're paying our wind providers not to provide power, to shut it down; \$80 million to vent steam at our nuclear plants. It just goes on and on and on. It's no wonder that the people of Ontario are starting to wake up to the cost of electricity and starting to join the dots and see why our manufacturing jobs are gone.

We've lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs. I guess the answer to this is to cloud the employment numbers by hiring 300,000 more government workers. The trouble



with government workers is it takes tax dollars from the private sector to pay for them. All that means is your costs go up. When the costs go up, you have less competitive—then you have less people paying your taxes, and we go out.

Here was an attempt by the member for Carleton-Mississippi Mills today to look at some of those tax dollars that are leaving the province. As I talked about, people in my riding see cement trucks coming in from Quebec, deliveries from building supplies. Imagine building a house and the amount of money that goes into supplies; 13% of that, those taxes—I guess the Ontario portion is 8%—we're not seeing here because nobody is paying it. They're not interested in putting rules in place to see that that happens, even if with the less regulation in Quebec, they can operate cheaper. But when they come here, they know already that their product is 13% cheaper.

I come from an area where 13% is a lot, and I know a lot of people are hiring people or getting products delivered from Quebec. We have to start looking after what's good for the province; we have to start looking for people and jobs. I had a project that I was trying to do earlier in the year and get it done during consti week. I had a little bit of carpet being placed. It was supposed to happen when I was at home so I could be around. The day before, the supplier calls up and says, "We're so busy, we can't get it done." So I said, "Well, really, I have to get it done because there's nobody here to let you in the house next week." They said, "Well, if it's really important, we'll see what we can do." So sure enough, I get a contractor who comes in to lay down the carpet.

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When he's done, he says, "I'd like to talk to you. I live in St. Isidore," which is just across in my neighbouring riding of Glengarry-Prescott-Russell, "and I'm working about a day a week. I only work when the supplier is so busy that his Quebec labourers can't handle the business." So he says, "They come in. Of course, they're part of larger unions. They're not busy in Quebec, so they are coming in and working under the table for less money. They don't have to pay the WSIB and all the other things that happen here." He says, "I'm forced to work one day a week. I can't survive on that. I can't raise my family on that."

That's what's happening with this labour mobility thing. It's not the big corporations that aren't getting jobs; it's the average Joe who is trying to make a living. I have friends who are carpenters and electricians. They can't get work in Quebec, yet they sit here and they lose contracts to contractors out of Quebec that build the houses. They do it. It's an expanded playing field that we don't have. I mean, we're up against the border. We can't go into the States and we can't go into Quebec. So, really, if you're in eastern Ontario, you're heavily penalized by these actions from Quebec.

We're a party that really supports open borders, and we're trying to enforce that through legislation. We see things that are happening in the press today with the

Quebec Legislature. They do everything they can to ensure that Ontario workers don't work there. I know the pipeline companies come across from Alberta, all the way across the country. They get to the township of South Glengarry and they lay off all the employees who aren't from Quebec and hire Quebec workers across the border, right across the province of Quebec where our based employees worked with them. It's just not fair. It's particularly worse when we have people who are looking for work, people who are now collecting unemployment insurance or ServiceOntario benefits, all because we won't take action, and I think it's time that we stepped up.

We see a bill like this, Bill 80, and you really have to wonder. This is a bill that arguably, when it was introduced, we didn't know when the CRTC code would be coming out. It was promised this year. Even myself, I didn't expect it before the fall. But it's here. It was issued June 3. It supersedes everything in this bill, and yet that's a priority for this government? You have to wonder, is it not time to wake up and look around?

I heard my seatmate saying that Ontario has the highest indebtedness of any jurisdiction that's not the federal or—

**Mr. John O'Toole:** It's \$19,000 for every single person.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Yes, \$19,000. It's the largest debt in the world. It's higher than Greece, and we're talking about lower-tier jurisdictions like Ontario. When is it time to wake up? I hear people talking about Michigan, bankrupt, and their debt is not nearly what Ontario's is. It's just time to look at what this province really needs, where we need to go with it.

You know, there are so many cases back where I live. Even if you're going to deal with cell service, why don't we look at trying to get cell service across the province? If you get off the 401 or out of the main cities, cell service is non-existent. We're doing major programs in this province to roll out high-speed Internet, but we refuse to use the latest wireless technologies. Instead, we're using old, outdated one-meg technologies that don't work well, are not sustainable. It's just time to sit back and look at, really, if we're going to spend money, why aren't we spending it in a place that really gives this province a little bit of an advantage? It's very difficult to operate in this world today if you don't have high-speed Internet. Yet here's an area where we're spending hundreds of millions of dollars of provincial money, and we still refuse to use technology that would allow the rural areas to also get cell service.

Can you imagine what would happen if you told the city of Toronto they were going to lose their cell service? Well, that's just the average day when you get five miles off the 401, and if you look around this great province of ours, there's a lot of territory that's more than five or 10 miles off the 401. It just could be so easily fixed when we're spending the money anyways. Move it towards the technology. With that extra revenue, I'm sure the money we're dedicating to try to roll out wireless 1-meg modem

Internet equipment that now is getting hard to get because it's now starting to break down—it's old enough that you can't buy it new. Suppliers would come in—maybe one of the major cell companies—and, with a little bit of government encouragement, would put some of this equipment out in the rural areas where it is now a safety issue.

If you're travelling up the highways, even in the major areas—if you get off the 401, people like to think that their cell service is going to work if they have an accident, but that's just the way rural Ontario is these days. It's unfortunate, because it wouldn't take new money. It's money that's being misspent today. I know I tried, a number of years before I was involved in this job—in my previous job as the mayor of South Glengarry, I tried to bring that across to the ministry. They were not interested in listening, and the money that we received—granted, we were too early for the new cell service, but, the rest of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry that have now, over the last two years, had this expensive equipment put out, still don't have cell service. We're in better shape there, because we have the 401 that goes through it, than many of the other areas are just off the 401.

I think it's in areas where we see that we have to, as a government here and a Legislature, look at trying to make us more competitive. We can spend money where we need to spend it or hold back. I mean, there's no shortage of waste. I didn't get around to talking about the Ornge air ambulance scandal that's still going on. This government is still doing everything that it can to make sure that we don't find out what exactly was spent there. We know from the Auditor General's report that this agency actually created, I think it was 12 spinoff private corporations, for profit, all being funded through the Ontario budget. They're not interested in finding out, because I guess they don't want the answer, because they don't want the public to know—salaries that were outrageous.

Members in my party—Frank Klees stood up and asked the question well before the last election. It was looked into by the minister, who said, "Don't worry; it's okay," but then we find out afterwards, after we received a little bit of the information, that it wasn't okay—

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Point of order.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I'm trying to find even a nodding acquaintance to the subject of the bill here, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Could I ask the member to speak to the bill that's in front of us?

**Mr. Jim McDonnell:** Basically, what I'm trying to say is that we're debating a bill that is now redundant. I asked the government to point out areas that are not covered now in legislation that is federal. I mean, really, when it comes to cell service, unlike the Quebec labour issue we have, when you cross the border into Quebec or Manitoba, the cellphones work. It's a federal jurisdiction.

Granted, we waited for years and years for them to come out with a code of conduct that we need in this country—no question. I think all of the provinces agreed that it should be done federally. Some of them had to act. Obviously, the government federally was slow acting, but they've come through now. I would have thought they would have dropped this bill. After three attempts of taking it through and letting it drop, now, when everything is covered, it all of a sudden becomes a top priority of this government.

I think that there are some small issues that really apply to cell companies, but they apply to many different companies. That should be looked after. We should drop this bill and look at more widely spread consumer protection issues that haven't been addressed. I know, as I say, that since we have so many cell subscribers in this province, it's a very popular bill. People aren't aware that it's covered at the federal level—and a much better job at it.

That's my message, really. I think it's time to start looking at some of the priorities in this province. Obviously, cell service is not one of them. As a party, there are a number of bills before us—the tanning bed act—a few of them that we all agree we all support. We don't think that we should be tying up the Legislature with these bills. We've certainly been, for some time now, agreeable to moving them through. We haven't seen a willingness from the government to move them through until they're trying to make an issue of them, but we'd rather see this Legislature tied up with important issues in this province, so we've agreed to move those bills through and move them through committee. Everybody agrees with them—the third party, the official opposition and the government—so what's the issue here? Let's move them through and let's get back to what the people of this province are really worried about. They're worried about their jobs. They're worried about the economy. They're worried about their children's future.

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I know that when I grew up, I didn't have to worry about the debt that we're talking about today, and my parents were worried about that. We're talking about a debt that was probably 10% of what it is today when they were my age. They were worried because they weren't used to borrowing money, and this government has certainly honed its skill at it. They've doubled the debt. If you listen to their own adviser, Don Drummond, he says it's on its way to tripling.

I was reading an article in Maclean's magazine earlier this year, and they were placing Ontario's likelihood of defaulting at 88% in the next 10 years—the province or the jurisdiction most likely to default. This is not a secret. I guess they're lucky that a lot of people don't read obscure magazines like Maclean's magazine. It's a pretty well-read magazine in this province. There are all kinds of warning signs. We see—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Point of order, the member for Mississauga East—Cooksville.

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** Speaker, I want to remind the member to please speak to Bill 60 and not about the debt and all the other things.



**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I'd ask the member to carry on. Please stay on the topic of the bill that's in front of us.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Thank you, Speaker.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a master on our side. He's giving me some advice which I plan to follow.

As I say, I'm tying this bill into—is this bill needed any longer? Is it worth the discussion we're going through here? I hear a government that's talking about the importance of getting this economy going, and we're talking about a bill that, quite frankly, is better looked at by the federal legislation that has already taken care of it. I'm not sure why we're taking it, other than I guess, as I said, it's trying to change the channel on something that we really should be worrying about. It may be an embarrassment to this government, but we should be talking about them. We should be talking about the scandals and the wasted money. This is money that could be going towards health care—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I would warn the member for the last time—if you would speak to the bill that's in front of us.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Speaker, I'm talking about the need for this bill. We're looking at legislation, and I guess I challenge the government to point out something that's in this legislation that's not already covered in federal law—law that is certainly a higher level.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** You can't repeat it often enough.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Yeah. I'm just questioning why we're moving through this legislation. What is the purpose of it?

I pointed out many things that we should be dealing with, and I think that's certainly fair in this discussion of this bill. It's not what I'm hearing in my riding. I'm hearing of issues like long-term beds. We can't place people. We don't have them. We're placing people in Cornwall in facilities that are outside of the riding. I hear that all the time. When you're dealing with moving people to areas that are more than an hour from their home to get a long-term bed, I think that talks about the issue. I don't hear them talking about this bill, Bill 60, and the need for new legislation, because if they're at all informed, they realize it's already there. It has taken away the need for this. We supported the bill. We still, I guess, support it in principle, but it's redundant. It's no longer required, and we just think that there are many different areas that they should be working on.

In talking to my own colleagues and my residents, we just wonder where this government is going. We think it has bigger fish to fry, things that could really make Ontario competitive again. I guess I commend them this week for their decision to start paying our wind power producers to stop producing—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I would state to the member that I've already warned you. If you carry on, you're just asking me to move on the debate. I

would like you to speak to the bill that is in front of us, because you continue to stray away from the topic.

This is my last warning. If not, then I will move on to the next speaker.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** It's hard to talk about this bill. There are things in it, but when we look through them, they've been looked after. I think in the last part of my speech, we talked about some of the issues that are talked about in this government—I'll just go back to some of my notes here—and they're dealt with already.

We talked about the voluntary sort of thing. This is not a voluntary code of conduct at the federal level; it's mandatory. That was one of the issues they talked about. They have no choice; they have to follow this. The suggestion that the CRTC code is being challenged in court: Nobody is challenging this bill. The cell companies have all agreed to follow it, so there's no need for this. I've even talked to the minister of the day. There are probably some minute things we could talk about, but the bill should be reduced to those, and actually, there's a need to cover that same issue of the refurbished equipment. Why is it restricted to cellphones? Should it not be right across the electronics industry? We could support that, and I think that's an easy bill.

That is the basic business practice. When you go through, if you're buying a cellphone at Future Shop or the Source, they'll tell you if it's refurbished or not. That's not covered in this bill. It is covered at the federal level, but I think it's something that could be covered in all electronic equipment.

We talked about how there are no penalties. I worked for a company that, at different times over the years, was challenged by the CRTC and the commission for complaints on telecom services. Those fines are worth hundreds of millions of dollars, in cases. I remember one: \$200 million. These aren't small fines that are being levied against these companies. They do listen.

I just get back to the fact that I think, instead of debating this bill for hours, we should probably be looking at more important things. Where we need to go in this province: That's a discussion. We talk about many issues in my riding. I'd like to see legislation that would increase the availability of cell service, but that's not in here either. Money that is going in within the ministry could be redirected in a way that would sponsor that. It would help more people in our area get the data services they need; it's not there. I hear from businesses that don't have service. In the township where I live, the lack of cell service throughout really makes it tough for emergency services, because they just aren't available. And where they are available, they're very sketchy; they're unreliable. There are constant drops. There's no talk in here about quality of service, which is possibly proper. It leaves it up to the consumer to choose what works. Unfortunately, once you get out of the big cities, there are no options. You're lucky if one supplier actually services an area.

Those steps are really where this bill should go. I think Ontario is a huge location. We have a problem with the

population being concentrated in certain areas. But when you look at the northern areas of this province and what they contribute to the economy, when you look at the rural areas, the agriculture—big portions of our economy, but they're ill-served by this bill because it doesn't address the shortage of service in those areas. If we're going to go through and make a point of passing this wireless legislation, we have to look at the areas that are underserved. There's no shortage of issues that we've heard from people driving into areas with a lack of service. It's unavailable to get emergency services.

Maybe I've talked long enough about it. Hopefully the government has listened and will look at hitting some of the priorities in this province. We'll see what happens. This used to be a priority. It certainly has been diminished in the last few months, because now it has been covered by a higher power: the federal legislation that is looking at services across the country. It is not restricted by our provincial borders.

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In my experience, when I drive to Quebec, service is much better than it is in Ontario, just because there's less dropage. They passed their legislation years ago—I'm sure not as early as the member opposite first introduced the private member's bill—and in that time frame we've seen changes, at least to the service product there, that seem to be working. On this side, though, we don't seem to see that, and we don't seem to see the desire by this province to work out some of our places where we have a lack of service, poor quality of service.

I know that's economics. You are allowing the companies to move in to the highly competitive areas where state-of-the-art equipment is being placed. These companies don't have a lot of capital. They don't have the ability to take money—basically, the urban areas are the cream of this industry, and the pie is being cut up into smaller parts.

As soon as you get outside of the city, where the big players have to provide some service because they do need to link up the cities, we don't see any competition. Trying to get buyers out there is next to impossible, and I think some regulation—even where there are facilities. I know in our area—I have a little bit of a technical background—we have towers that service areas where the radios are pointed up the highways, and they don't point back towards the areas off the major highways. I think legislation could somehow regulate that to make those areas work better. That's something that would be of very little cost to these suppliers. We've allowed them to build their 120-foot towers. I think the onus is either to open them up to other suppliers more readily or point the radio so that you get a full view. The technology is there. The equipment is installed. The fibre backbone or transport backbone is there, but we haven't addressed that.

I think those are issues that not only affect eastern Ontario, but southwestern Ontario, the north. These are expensive facilities, and they don't have to share them. If they do share them, it's very expensive. These are important infrastructure items where we should be more apt to utilize them the best we can. I think it's sad when

you live a mile and a half north of the 401, and you have no service. That's what happens when you don't force the companies to somehow better serve the territories.

I know with the basic telephone, we used to collect a little bit of money across the province, across the country, and turn that money back so that it goes back to subsidize the less-dense areas. That's good for everybody. When people leave the cities and travel out in the country, they would probably like the idea that if they went off the road or into a ditch, they would actually have the emergency services that their cellphone provides. Today, in most of those areas, all you get is a signal saying there's no service.

I thank you, Speaker, for being able to talk about this today. I look forward to hearing comments.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I want to congratulate the member from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry because I believe he covered a lot of good ground and he made a lot of sense as he spoke to this particular bill. Both he and I and other members of the Conservative Party and Liberal Party, I believe, supported Bill 82 when it was introduced. There were a lot of good things in this bill that we spoke to that were very useful. There needs to be greater protection for consumers of wireless phone, smartphone and mobile device services. There's no doubt about it. That's why we spoke strongly in support of that bill. But his point and one of the main points is that the CRTC, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, has ruled on this and has covered a lot of ground which covers largely what was in Bill 82, now Bill 60. If that is true—

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Some.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** The minister says, "Some," but as far as I can tell, it covers a lot of ground that's already in this bill. If that is true, then we're debating something that now is, as the member said, redundant. It might have been useful to separate what the CRTC has already ruled on that's in this bill, separate that, and introduce a new bill with things that they haven't covered that fall within provincial responsibility and perhaps tackle other issues that we've spoken to—at least New Democrats have—with respect to the whole idea of having a consumer advocate, which is something that I believe we desperately need.

When consumers take on telecommunications giants, they're on their own, and it's very difficult for the majority of consumers to take them on. Usually they don't, because they don't have the skills, they don't have the money, and they don't have the power or the knowledge, the know-how, to be able to take on a giant of that sort. We could be talking about a consumer advocate that I believe consumers would really love. But my friend from Bramalea-Gore-Malton will have a lead soon, and he will cover some of these subjects. I look forward to that.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?



**Mr. Vic Dhillon:** Mr. Speaker, I'm very happy to rise to speak on Bill 60, the Wireless Services Agreements Act. This bill would help Ontarians in their everyday lives by strengthening consumer protection for people who use wireless services. Cellphones have become a necessity in life, and it's good. People are using cellphones to help improve their lives, personally and professionally.

At one time, cellphones were considered a sort of status symbol, because originally, when they came out, they were quite costly. Thanks to advances in technology, costs have come down, but there remain problems with respect to different companies using unfair billing practices. That's why we brought forward this bill.

I'm going to go over some of the elements of this bill. First, it would require full disclosure of the goods and services, which would explain which services are included and how the total costs add up. Suppliers will be obligated to disclose the manufacturer's warranty, if there is a warranty, and would have to provide that in writing. Cancellation fees would have to be explained as to how they're calculated. One thing I've had a few complaints about, and an issue I've had personally, was problems with roaming charges. Often it was unclear what I would be charged if I was visiting the US or overseas. That was something that was unclear, which I'm hopeful this bill will attempt to address.

The bigger component of this bill, I think, deals with providing easy-to-understand agreements. People who are proficient in English have a hard time understanding the fine print in some agreements. I think—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you.

Questions and comments? The member for Durham.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to clarify things right from the beginning, at the outset here. Our critic, the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, is a very qualified technical person. Now, this bill, as he alluded to several times in his remarks—we basically agree with most of it. Who wouldn't agree with consumer protection? However, when you boil it down here, there's more said than done in this bill. To be honest with you, the member who just spoke, Mr. Dhillon—I can't think of his riding—

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Brampton West.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Brampton. My point is, he read from the preamble of the bill. I get that. I listened with some interest, because I have an interest in this topic, and I want to give a compliment—a shout-out, if you will—to the minister, Tracy MacCharles, from Durham. She's a very caring person, and she's been given this from David Orazietti basically, and to your credit, you gave him most of the time to speak on the bill.

I think we're all passionate about making sure we have fair and open disclosure on the billing practices of all cellphone companies. I believe the federal government has a role in this for setting standards, and we should adhere to that. I think our critic has done a great job on the two consumer bills that have come forward

this week. He has had a couple of one-hour lead speeches where he tried to fill the time and add some information and knowledge to the public who might be listening or watching on television—they could easily watch Oprah or Dr. Phil, but that's a whole different discussion.

I'd say this: Our party would probably support this bill. It needs to go to committee, because there's a lack of clarity in the bill. The section in the preamble: "For example, a supplier must comply with certain disclosure requirements in order to amend a wireless agreement." How vague can you be? Let's be specific about what disclosures are required. That's what I want—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

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The member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, you have two minutes.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I'd like to thank the member from Trinity–Spadina, the member from Brampton West and the member from Durham.

I think that the member from Trinity–Spadina—he agrees that the issues have been dealt with, and they have been.

The member from Brampton West talked about full disclosure and the roaming charges. Well, the roaming charges are not handled in this bill because it's outside the jurisdiction. It's handled in the federal bill. The CRTC actually puts a limit of \$100 on it. And it must be handled at the federal level, because it's interprovincial. I think that that's positive, but that that's the shell shock—that part of it has been looked after. The issues that I've heard here have all been dealt with.

I know that the bill was put forth by the member opposite many times, and there was all-party support for years on this. I'm not sure why we're dealing with it now.

I guess we could just go back. There are a lot of important things in this province to deal with. I think this bill is now well beyond its best-before date, just because it's been looked at. I commend the minister for moving on it; it certainly was an issue at the time. By the time she got into the role, though, the timing of the issue was well past.

There are many different things in the ministry that we could be looking after. I think we talked about some of it: electronics equipment in general, just being more clear, even though that is a standard. It's not the law, so sometimes things like that have to be cleared up. There are some of the issues with the Corporations Act—that group is waiting for a solution. We could be moving into that, or we could just be working on the economy in another ministry, because I think that's important.

**Mr. Rob Leone:** Let's talk about jobs.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Yes. So I think that that's important. It's jobs and the economy that I hear about.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I think I must also give some credit to the member from Stormont–Dundas–South

Glengarry. He did cover one of the glaring problems with this bill: the fact that there is a certain element of redundancy. There are, in fairness, some different aspects, which my colleague from Trinity-Spadina mentioned. I think the proposal of cleaving out those differences and just putting those before this House would have made a lot of sense. The redundancy is superseded by the CRTC anyway, that is, in terms of telecommunication, a higher level of authority—and it's not necessary to bring those same issues provincially.

In fact, I'll talk about what the CRTC did. They actually have, in some of the important aspects, gone further and placed caps and limits, which are exactly why this issue started making headlines. The issue of cellphones and the potential abuse that people could face, and some people did face, in terms of overcharges, not being notified when they were going over their limits—there were a number of stories coming out.

One story, anecdotally, was about a young son of a vacation-goer. His child was playing around with his phone, and it turned out that he had racked up upward of thousands of dollars of roaming charges without the parent knowing. It was just a video game of some sort, and playing it had racked up thousands of dollars of charges because of roaming overages. That made big headlines, and rightly so. This is a serious issue. Why could this happen? How could this overuse of the data roaming continue without any sort of notification, without any sort of checks and balances in place? It is very important to address it.

The timing of the bill, the member from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry mentioned, was actually quite well summarized. The bill initially was being introduced when Ontario was playing catch-up. Other provinces already had a wireless protection bill in place; Ontario didn't, and so Ontario wanted to get caught up and provide some protection as well. Well, that made sense, and the bill was introduced. But then subsequently, the CRTC already covered all these issues and more, so then the relevance of the bill obviously was diminished.

Let's talk a little bit about the importance of cellphones and what we need to be doing in terms of providing good protection for consumers. One of the things we know and studies have confirmed is that cellphone usage, and this is something that we all can tell in our own lives colloquially and anecdotally, is increasing. That's a well-known fact. People are using cellphones more and more. In fact, many people are switching to cellphones over the use of land lines. That's something that's an ongoing trend.

A somewhat more interesting trend and something less well known is that cellphones are becoming increasingly the main vehicle through which people access the Internet. That's an important point to note: Cellphones are something that people are using more and more often to access the Internet.

Why I bring this up is that the Internet, more and more, is not a luxury or a source of entertainment; it's actually becoming a very serious necessity, and that's for

a number of reasons. One is, simply put, knowledge: It's a way of democratizing knowledge. With the Internet, you can access information that otherwise would have been very difficult to access. You can access information from universities. You can see some of the world-class, cutting-edge procedures and technology in the convenience of the Internet. You can access that. So as that becomes more important as a way of providing information to the general public, access to the Internet becomes more and more important.

I'd like to propose that it has now become an essential resource. If that's something we accept, then providing more access to this essential resource is important. It's particularly important if we look at issues of poverty and issues of affordability. If we accept that the Internet is now important to access, that it's an important resource that we need to access, and if we accept that more people are using their cellphones to access the Internet, then a consumer services issue that we need to address is: How can we make the Internet more affordable, particularly given the fact that people are using cellphones to do so? We need to look at managing the actual cost of cellphones and the rates that are being charged.

Canada is one of the most expensive places in the world to send text messages, to make phone calls and, most importantly, to use data. That's an area I think where we really need to put more pressure to actually make it more affordable. That's an area that this bill does not address, and that's an area that many people complain about if you travel overseas. I had the great opportunity of travelling overseas. In the Scandinavian countries, their data rates—it's a developed nation, a smaller country than Canada, so issues of scales of economy don't apply. In those countries, they're paying as little as half of what we're paying in terms of data charges. Other countries that are developing nations are paying even less than that. Again, I think that's an issue we need to address, and it's not being addressed.

The reason, again, I suggest that access to the Internet is such an important issue is, for many government services, for online forums, for accessing many services, right now the easier way to do that is going through the Internet.

One of the things, though, that I am encouraged by in terms of why this bill has made it to the floor here is that it is an indication of an alternative form of democracy. When we look at one of the key reasons why I think this bill became so popular, became an issue that has made it through the floor of the Ontario Legislative Assembly, is because there's a high number of complaints received by the CCTS, the Commissioner for Complaints for Telecommunications Services.

In 2010-11, the CCTS received 8,007 complaints, which constituted a 114% increase over previous years, so a significant increase in complaints; like I said, 114%. Of the complaints received, 62% of those complaints were in respect to wireless companies or wireless contracts. One of the things that I am encouraged by is that people complained about an issue; they complained



about it to such an extent, and there was such an increase in complaints, that this issue that people thought was a problem, the fact that their wireless contract were unfair or there were disclosure issues or there were overages, there were charges that they were shocked to see—we talked about shell shock—those complaints then prompted the government to take some action. At a time when many of us are concerned with growing apathy—the Lieutenant Governor also talked about the fact that apathy is a serious issue, voter apathy, the fact that people are not participating in democracy.

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I'm encouraged that this form of democracy—by complaining about something—resulted in some action. I want to encourage people who are listening and who may be interested in this issue that your voice does matter. Complaining about issues is important. It's a fundamental part of democracy. If there's something going on in any industry, whether it's in a consumer services file, a labour file or any area that this government has anything to do with, please complain. That's your voice. That's the strength of democracy. Complain about what you don't like. That's a way to get some action done. In this case, one encouraging component of the fact of this bill being brought before this assembly is that it was as a result of a number of complaints.

What I'd like to now cover is—clarify the redundancy and where there are some distinctions. What the CRTC did—it was released June 3. It's going to come into effect December 2. The CRTC essentially will release something called the wireless code. The wireless code basically provides a guideline with specific remedies, as well as punishments for any infringements on this code, and it clarifies a number of areas.

One of the major parts that the CRTC wireless code does cover is the importance of use of clear language, language that people can understand, language that's put forward in a simple manner. That's mirrored by what's included in Bill 82, which has now been reintroduced as Bill 60—the importance of disclosure. That aspect has been covered in terms of the plain language used, the prices and the services that are covered by the particular wireless provider. Those issues are already covered.

Cancellation fees and commitment periods are all covered. The monthly minimum charge needs to be explained expressly—that's all covered by the CRTC—optional services, clarification on what the roaming charges will be, service coverage maps, which was a major issue in Brampton, given that there are some providers that don't cover the entire region of Brampton. So those areas are all covered.

The CRTC goes even further and talks about prepaid services. They actually cover more than what we're covering here in the Ontario Legislative Assembly. The important part of the CRTC is that they actually placed caps. Again, this was the major issue. People were seeing their bills, when they were going on vacation or travelling for work—they would come home and see a \$1,000 bill. Someone saw a \$20,000 bill for their cell-

phone. Imagine you came home, you opened up your mail—you went on vacation, you probably spent a little bit of money to go on vacation—thinking, “Okay, I'm going to get back to my regular life and make sure things are in order.” You open up your mail, pull out your letter and you see a \$20,000 cellphone charge, and you're floored. You're like, “I was on vacation, I wasn't really using my phone. What happened?” That is a major issue, and that issue is directly addressed by the CRTC. It's not addressed in our Bill 60 provincially. It's already been addressed.

There are caps on data charges. There are caps on international roaming, as well as notifications. I think that's very important. At the minimum, wireless companies should ensure that they provide an update—“Hey, listen, you're going over your data roaming charges,” or “Your international roaming charges are at this level. Do you wish to continue?” That notification is essential. That's all included now.

The reason why it's important to talk about the redundancies and the fact that the CRTC code goes even further is that it calls into question why the government chose to bring this bill forward. I think that's a very important issue to discuss: Why this bill and not the plethora of other bills that could have been brought forward.

This wireless service agreement act was important at a time when there was no CRTC code that covered it; I agree. That's why, as many of the other speakers have said, it received all-party support—because it was necessary. People were upset about what was going on. They wanted some sort of protection, and it was a requirement and, in fact, it's a duty of this government to provide some protection. That was a good step. I'll give credit to the government for bringing the issue forward. That was appropriate.

But at this point in time, given the guidelines provided by the CRTC, it's not as relevant. It doesn't have that same level of importance. I would contend that there are other bills, like the anti-SLAPP legislation, which would be much more important to bring forward at this time. That's something, in my opinion, that would protect the hallmark of democracy, which is the right to dissent. People should be able to get up in their communities and say, “I don't agree with this development. I don't agree with this proposal. I think this is ineffectual, unhelpful,” whatever their issue may be. That people who work in their communities and are trying raise issues are being silenced with lawsuits is offensive to democracy and that's an issue that should be raised. I think that bill should have been called instead of this bill.

I make that point because I think we need to make sure we use our precious time here effectively. We have a limited amount of time and a limited number of bills that can be brought forward, that can be passed, to go through the democratic process, which is something that I support. We need to have hearings. We need to hear from the public. Committee hearings are essential; they're important. They're a vibrant part of our democracy.

That's where the public gets an input on the laws that are made. So to apportion time for all of that, we need to make sure we choose the right priorities. That's why I say, given the redundancies, this wasn't necessarily a priority in my mind, and I don't think it was a priority in the minds of the people when we already know that this issue has been tackled. But that's my issue with that.

That being said, let's talk about some of the differences, some of the issues that aren't covered by the CRTC and are covered by this bill. One of the complaints that I often hear about is, if you create a provision or create a piece of legislation and it gives someone a protection, it gives them a certain right or gives them a certain guarantee, the problem with that often is, where is the enforcement? If you give someone a certain legislated right and they make use of that right, how do we ensure that there aren't any repercussions and how do we ensure that that right is actually enforced?

In this case, there are actually some remedies provided, which I think are a good sign. I'll make the contrast: When we were talking about the caretaker leave for loved ones who are critically ill or injured, one of the complaints about that bill is that that's a great idea if you have a loved one who is critically ill or injured and you want to take time off from work so that you can take care of that person. You might have to take a long period of time off. You want to be able to have your job when you come back and your loved one has been taken care of. That's a great idea, and I've said that in the House; it's a great idea. The problem, though, is, where is the guarantee that if I do take that leave, if I take my time off from work and I take care of my loved one, and after six months I go back to my employment, the employer will actually take me back? What if they have hired someone else in the meantime? Where is the enforcement? In this bill, that issue of enforcement or remedy has actually been addressed in some way, and I'd like to talk about that. I think that is a positive sign and something that is useful.

One of the first areas is that there's a requirement for full disclosure of the costs, of what type of contract you're getting into, what the additional service charges may be; there's a requirement of full disclosure in plain language. So that's an important right they're providing us with. What's the remedy if that's breached or if they're not actually providing the full disclosure? There is a cancellation for nondisclosure: section 11. It provides a remedy. So if you're faced with a situation where you're signing up for a particular wireless company and you sign up for a bill, and then afterwards you look at it and it doesn't clearly state that there's going to be an additional \$100 charge a month for having signed up, and you look through your contract and you don't see that anywhere and you say, "You know what? I'm going to cancel this because that's unfair. I don't want to be paying \$100 extra a month," there's actually a piece of legislation that says that if the disclosure is not there, you can cancel and there are absolutely no fees charged to you for cancelling because of their lack of disclosure.

That's actually a good remedy. That's a step in the right direction. We need to make sure that any time we provide a right to someone as a principle—we give someone a right or a guarantee—there is a sufficient remedy or sanction for the company or the employer or whoever the other party is that doesn't follow through.

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In this case, section 11 reads, "A consumer under a wireless agreement may cancel it within one year after entering into the agreement if the agreement does not meet the requirements of subsection 10(1) or if the supplier does not comply with subsection 10(2)."

Again, as a principle, I think this is an important area to look at. If ever there is a right we guarantee to the public, if we guarantee a consumer right, we must also provide a remedy or a sanction. Here, this law does provide that.

The other section which I think is a good point that's not included in the CRTC—so it's not redundant, and it does provide us with some benefit—is section 17 of the bill. It calls for a right of action if no refund. This again is another area where I think we need to look at this type of legislation and employ this principle in other areas of law.

If you send a letter to a company and you say, "I want my refund because you've overcharged me," for whatever you've been charged for, and the company doesn't respond, it doesn't say, "Sure, we'll give you that refund," then you're given a right, a remedy, that you can sue that company for three times the amount you're due. The reason I'm assuming the three times the amount is to provide some incentive. If you're looking at \$100 that you're owed, you may be thinking, "If I go to Small Claims Court over \$100, I might have made close to \$100 working a day. It's really not worth my time to take off a day to fight this case in court to get that \$100 back." But if you're entitled to three times that, \$300, there's a bit of an incentive for the consumer to say, "You know what? Three hundred dollars, that's a little bit more. I could actually take the day off work, fight this case, show that I wasn't given this refund, and it might be worth my while."

An additional problem is that in the bill, if you're going to go to court and you're going to take on a cell-phone company, there have to be some other protections. As my colleague from Trinity-Spadina said, if you have a consumer on one side and you have a wireless provider on the other, you're going to have a significant difference in terms of access to justice. If you're a wireless provider and you have very deep pockets, you can hire significant lawyers to protect your interests. If you're a consumer, you may not have the same knowledge of the law. You may not be as comfortable going to court. So I think what needs to be added in addition—the remedy is there, but there should be some clarity on the onus. If you're suggesting that a company hasn't provided you with a refund, the onus should be on the company to prove that they've done everything they needed to do so that the consumer isn't in a tough position where they have to



prove their case. I think the burden of proof should be shifted in this circumstance to provide some greater protection to the consumer, particularly when we know there's a great imbalance between the consumer and the provider. That's an additional suggestion that I make: If we want to make the remedy stronger, it should have some provision for a shifting of the burden of proof or some ability so that an everyday person could actually do that.

I think this was brought up by my colleague from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry, the idea that if we want to be a good advocate for the consumer and ensure that consumers are receiving the services they require or they deserve, then in the area of wireless services, one big complaint that's been received, I'm sure, from a number of people from rural communities is that they don't have wireless coverage, or their wireless coverage isn't very good.

We've seen in many developing nations that wireless technology is often the best way of addressing a lack of infrastructure. What I mean by that is that if you live in a community where there may not be significant cables for wireless Internet, there may not be—there are places where they are still using dial-up, and dial-up is something I don't think many people know about, where you literally use your phone line, and your computer dials up to the Internet and makes a funny sound before it connects. That's how they access the Internet. Dial-ups nowadays are so slow that you can't really load up any meaningful websites. You can't actually access information with dial-up technology, and many people in rural communities are still using dial-up.

Like I said before, the Internet is no longer a luxury. It's not something simply for entertainment; it's a necessity. It's a way of levelling the field for knowledge. It's a way of providing for access to information. It's often a way that people use to access resources like government services—renewing plates. Many services are now provided online, much easier and with less hassle, but if you don't have access to it, how can you make use of this benefit?

As advocates for consumers, what I'd like to see is increased cellphone towers or increased coverage in rural communities and northern communities. That's a way of addressing two problems at once: (1), people who want that wireless service for emergency reasons, for communication with their friends and family; and (2) as a way to address the fact that there isn't the infrastructure to set up high-speed Internet. If you have a strong wireless network, there are comparable speeds available now, with the new networks and the new technology out there. You can actually get similar speeds through wireless coverage that you can receive through other forms of high-speed Internet. It's a way of providing, again, a meaningful benefit to people. It's not addressed in this bill, but it's something that's real.

Some of the things, what we need lower costs. That's something that we're lacking strongly in Ontario. The costs for wireless services are far too high. We're

paying some of the highest rates in the entire world here in Canada. Our rates need to come down, particularly when it comes to data, given that data is now an essential resource. If that's all true, then we need to provide greater coverage in rural and northern communities. They don't have the coverage that they need, and I think now that it's a necessity as opposed to a luxury, that's something that we should look at, and that's something that this bill should have provided for—some way of ensuring that there is greater coverage in those rural areas.

Just as a way of providing some background in terms of the high costs and what the differences are, the New America Foundation's Open Technology Initiative, which was on October 14, 2010, talked about the situation and compared the prices we're paying and some of the costs that other people are paying around the world. They looked at cellphone charges over the past five years. It was a study commissioned by the New America Foundation's Open Technology Initiative, and the conclusion was that we're still paying some of the highest rates for cellphone and wireless services in the world. They looked at one quite compelling difference—this is, again, from 2010, when the report was released. The average price that Canadians were paying in 2010, using the same dollar figures, for a voice, texting and data plan was \$67.50 a month. If we contrast that with other countries, Hong Kong averages for a similar service of voice, texting and data, \$13.50; in India, it's \$12.90. That's a significant difference. When we talk about how expensive our rates are here in Canada, we think they might be a little bit more, but this is well over 200% different in terms of the charges. This is a significant difference, and it's a serious barrier.

Imagine folks who are in positions where they're barely making ends meet. They're living below the poverty line, and they need to access the Internet. They need to communicate with people for jobs; for making sure, if they submitted a resumé, they get a call back. Having a phone line is no longer a luxury, it's a necessity. That's how people communicate with one another. If the rates are so much higher here in Ontario and in Canada, we are doing quite a big disservice to people who are unable to afford these high rates, particularly given the contrasts.

Just once again, I have to repeat that in Canada the average is \$67.50; in Hong Kong and India, it's \$13.50 and \$12.90 respectively. It's a significant difference.

Those two examples, obviously, are the most extreme. One might say that perhaps there's a different cost associated with Hong Kong, which has a much larger population, as well as India—and perhaps some issues about the fact that they are developing nations as opposed to developed nations. Comparing the two might not be as fair of a comparison, given population and demographics, so let's look at other countries.

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If we compare a post-paid plan in Canada, and this is a monthly fee, about 250 minutes, in Canada the rate is \$38.70. If we compare it to Denmark, which is also a

developed nation, not a very large nation in terms of size or population, Canada, again, was \$38.70 in 2010, average, for a post-paid plan, for about 250 minutes. In Denmark—think about what the difference will be—it's \$17 for a similar amount of time, about 250 minutes, so less than half, and that's also a developed nation with a smaller population, so the economies of scale are similar. In fact, they're favouring Canada and disadvantaging Denmark in terms of economies of scale, and they are still paying less than half of what we're paying. So there is a significant problem here with the cost of cellphone services, and that's an area that we need to definitely address.

Just one other example. If we look at text services, in terms of texting, that's where we're paying even more in terms of comparison of what we're paying here in Ontario and in other countries around the world. For text services, if you look in terms of prices per text, in Canada we're paying over 15 cents per text. In Denmark they're paying three cents per text, and in Sweden, again, four cents per text.

So on every level, from data to voice to texting, this is a significant area where consumers here in Ontario are suffering in that we are paying far too high rates.

Again, I ask this government to look at our priorities. If we're serious about providing good consumer service protection for our residents, then let's look at some of the priorities. The priorities are affordable wireless services—that's a priority. We need to make it affordable. Particularly when it comes to data, we need to make sure that it's something that people can afford.

We also need to make sure that the wireless services are available in rural and northern communities. They already have significant disadvantages that they're facing. Let's not make it, as well, another disadvantage that they don't have access to their wireless services, particularly with data. In fact, this could be a way for us to remedy the infrastructure paucity or the lack of infrastructure, that cellphone towers are much easier to place into rural and northern communities than putting in the framework for high-speed Internet.

When it comes to the priorities of this government, given the fact that we're addressing something that has already been largely addressed by the CRTC, and in fact with more detail and with stronger protection, I question the relevance of this bill and I question our priorities, particularly the priorities of this government. Why is the Liberal government bringing this bill forward and not other bills that are much more relevant and more timely in terms of their necessity? They would show greater respect for the limited and precious time we have here.

I agree with the intent of this bill. I agree with the protection that we need to give consumers, and I don't criticize that. But I do criticize if we have limited time and we have a bill that has already ostensibly been covered by another agency which supersedes us, provides stronger protection and goes further, and this bill provides some small areas which are different, but largely it's redundant. Largely it's been covered, and covered

better, by the CRTC because they actually have the mandate—not because Ontario didn't try, but the CRTC has a broader mandate. They can actually cap fees. They can actually limit the roaming and data charges that people were suffering.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** They said they could coexist.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** They can certainly coexist. That's a great point. They can coexist, but there doesn't need to be the redundancy. There are many areas that have already been covered by something that supersedes us, and if there's already protection in place, we should look at other bills that are covering areas that need to be covered.

Again, I have to take the time to say that the anti-SLAPP legislation that was presented by the Attorney General, something that we called for as the NDP, was a great piece of legislation. It was something that many stakeholders had demanded and asked for, and I was happy to see it finally come through, though I wish it would have come through sooner, when we had asked for it years and years ago in the NDP. But I'm glad it did come forward. That's a bill I'd like to see called by this government.

I issue a challenge to this government: Let's make sure the priorities are in place. Protecting democracy should be one of our highest priorities. It's one of our most prized possessions. It's one of the most valuable things that we cherish here in Ontario and in Canada. The right to dissent, the right to disagree, the right to raise our voice and to organize our communities—that's being threatened by lawsuits which are simply geared at silencing people. They're simply geared at quieting those who wish to raise their voice in their community. Let's bring that bill forward, Mr. Speaker, a bill that would actually provide some protection to the people of Ontario. I hope that the government is listening and paying attention and that that's something that we look at addressing.

The other thing that I'd like to see when it comes to protections for consumer services in the area of wireless: We see that the biggest concern that comes up, and this bill does cover it, is when contracts are unclear and you hope to cancel your contract and you've received a benefit, like a cellphone. You sign up to a contract, and you sign on for three years because you're going to get this shiny new cellphone that otherwise would be \$1,000 but if you sign up for a three-year contract, you can get it for free. You've been given an inducement—which is fine; that's part of doing business—and you sign up for a three-year contract. A year into that contract, you decide, you know what? I'm paying a lot on this contract. I want to go to another company. Another company is providing a great deal. They're giving me unlimited minutes. They're giving me more data. I want to switch over to that company. You ask to cancel, and you're asked to pay more than the phone is even worth just to switch over. Now I understand the company wants to recoup the loss of their phone. That's pretty fair. They've given you this



inducement; they've given you a phone for free. So a company should be able to at least recover the phone cost. But when they're charging in excess of twice the value of the phone, in some circumstances, just to cancel your plan, that seems to be absolutely unfair. That's an area that this bill does address, and that's something that's not necessarily covered by the CRTC with the same degree of detail. That's something I was happy to see. People should be free to switch companies to encourage competition with a view to seeing our rates come down. That's something that was a promising sign.

Another area that was brought up by one of my colleagues from Hamilton was that if you purchase a phone through a cellphone provider and that phone doesn't work, you are still being charged, though, for your wireless services even though your phone doesn't work. That's absolutely unfair. Why should you be charged for a product that doesn't work and for services that need to go through that product? So this bill does include some protection for that. If your phone doesn't work, or your

phone is lost or needs to be repaired, if you notify this wireless provider, they must cease charging you. That was a positive thing that I saw in this bill, and it's something that definitely will help out many people who have been in this circumstance before, where they try to send their phone in for repair. While the phone is being repaired, they're not given a loaner phone, so they're basically being charged for a service they can't receive even if they wanted to because they don't have a phone to receive it with.

I notice, Mr. Speaker, that I think my time has come close to an end. I don't know, Mr. Speaker, if you feel that I should wrap up my discussion at this point and perhaps save my time for another day. I notice you're nodding.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands adjourned until Monday, September 16, at 10:30 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1759.*

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
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Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Holyday, Douglas C. (PC)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
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**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Monday 16 September 2013**

**Lundi 16 septembre 2013**

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 16 September 2013

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 16 septembre 2013

*The House met at 1030.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.  
*Prayers.*

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I'd like to introduce Minister Piruzza's guest from the great riding of Windsor West, Mr. Randall Koop, who is the president of Ridge Recycling.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** I'm delighted today to have many members of the High Park Residents' Association, High Park Coalition and High Park Tenants' Association here in the House with us.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Jasper Ross is the page captain today, and his mother is here from the riding: Lisa Sizeland-Ross—I think she's just making her way through the gallery now—and her friend Maria Mujahid. Welcome to Queen's Park. We look forward to having them see this shortened session today.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I don't think there's a rule against introducing someone twice, but I would like to welcome again Mr. J. Randall Koop, who is here from my neck of the woods in Windsor and Essex county and Leamington. It is his first time in question period, so let's give him a warm question period welcome from the members.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On behalf of the member from Niagara Falls: Page Erica George is here. Her grandmother Linda Reid; grandfather Doug Reid; father, Edward George; sister Lauren George; and sister Vanessa George are in the gallery this morning to support our page.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Premier, the International Plowing Match is taking place this week in Perth county, as you will know. My caucus colleagues and I are pleased to be attending and to meet with the people from rural Ontario. These people don't ask for much and they certainly don't get much from this government. One of the few programs that is available to them is the Rural Economic Development program. It is a program designed to assist businesses in communities in rural areas to succeed.

Premier, can you explain to the people of Ontario why you gave funds designated for rural communities to businesses in Toronto last week?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to have a question on agriculture and food from my critic. I think it's fantastic. If it takes the International Plowing Match to get a question, so be it. It's great.

I want to let him know that this morning I was at FoodShare in Toronto with farmers from all over the province talking about the \$30-million investment that we're going to be making in local food. That \$30 million is going to support communities across the province, and it is an absolute priority of farmers and processors—so producers and processors—that, as a government, we support the local food movement and that we make sure that municipalities and communities across the province do everything they can to support local food. I'm very proud that we're doing that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Back to the Premier: Premier, it's well and good what you did this morning. The question was about what you did last week.

Premier, after six months as Minister of Agriculture, I would hope that you could recognize rural Ontario. Many of our rural communities desperately need jobs. Your spiralling hydro rates are forcing businesses to close. We've lost over 9,000 jobs because of your government's decision on horse racing. And now you're giving money from the Rural Economic Development program to businesses in Markham, Woodbridge and Toronto.

Premier, would you consider Woodbridge part of rural Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let me just say that I understand that investment in rural Ontario is critical. The rural economic development fund, \$4.5 million available this fiscal year—those dollars are helping rural municipalities. We also have invested, since 2003, \$167 million in 418 projects, and, as I said, the local food fund—\$30 million that we announced this morning.

But Mr. Speaker, the premise of the member's question is that there is an unbridgeable divide between different parts of the province, that somehow promoting local food or supporting food processing in a suburban or an urban area does not support the agri-food industry. We are one Ontario; we work together. That is why we're making investments in local food.

1040

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

*Interjections.*



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Perfect.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No, no. The member from Durham, no.

Final supplementary, please.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Back to the Premier: Premier, it's obvious from your answer that you don't understand the premise of this question. I'd like to read you a quote from the Rural Economic Development program guide. Under "Eligible applicant(s)," it says, "For the purposes of the RED program, 'rural' encompasses all of Ontario with the exception of the greater Toronto area (GTA) and eight large urban areas." That's fairly clear to me, so when those projects were approved, in fact, they did not comply with the RED program.

Now, I can tell you that at the plowing match tomorrow, no one will consider companies in Markham as part of rural Ontario—or from Woodbridge or Toronto. Could you tell me what percentage of the program you are actually spending in those larger municipalities that are not eligible for that program according to the rules you put in place?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Again, Mr. Speaker, I think that to suggest that investment in food processing is not part of investment in the agri-food sector and doesn't support producers means that the member opposite just does not understand how that \$34-billion industry works.

In 2012-13, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food's program investments and service investments led to \$503 million invested, and created and retained more than 2,400 jobs. We are making those investments to create jobs, Mr. Speaker, and to support the industry. That is what those programs and investments are intended to do.

I hope the member opposite will support the Local Food Act, Mr. Speaker. I hope the member understands that making those investments supports producers, supports food processors across the province, across one Ontario.

## HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** My question is for the Premier. Premier, since 2011, 9,000 jobs have left Ontario's horse racing industry, badly impacting rural Ontario. Worse still, the McGuinty-Wynne government, supported by the NDP, has single-handedly driven thousands of owners to flee Ontario's horse racing industry, taking with them \$1 billion in investments. In fact, the very existence of a viable breeding sector is now in complete and utter jeopardy. Sadly, rural Ontario knows that your government doesn't have even a single idea how to fix the McGuinty-Wynne horse racing crisis.

Premier, how can you justify spending over half a million dollars in consulting fees while over 9,000 men and women have now lost their jobs in Ontario's horse racing industry?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please.

We've started the habit again of me hearing members' names being said in the House. I'm going to remind all members—and from here on in, I'm going to be somewhat stricter—please refer to all members by either their riding or their title. That helps elevate the debate.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker.

Well, you know, I'm sure the member opposite is aware that we had a horse racing season this year, Mr. Speaker, and it wasn't at all clear that that was going to happen. It did happen. It was a robust season, and my intention and my objective is to make sure that that continues, that we have a sustainable horse racing industry well into the future.

We've committed \$180 million to allow for that transition to a more sustainable industry, and the member opposite knows full well that it was one of the recommendations of the Drummond report that we take a look at this industry, but it needs to be that we move to a future where there is sustainability. That's what John Snobelen and Elmer Buchanan and John Wilkinson are helping us with, and I am very optimistic—we've had a lot of success so far—that we will have a sustainable horse racing industry into the future. He should be celebrating that, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Back to the Premier: Premier, the Ontario Racing Commission reports that the number of licensed horse owners has dropped over 30%. In fact, your plan to close the Dresden Raceway in my riding, along with six other standardbred tracks throughout the province, will result in thousands more jobs being lost.

Premier, only Tim Hudak and the Ontario PCs have put forward a plan to build on the existing partnership and strengthen Ontario's horse racing industry. Premier, will you immediately scrap the Liberal modernization plan, stop building dozens of new casinos across the province and instead re-establish a partnership with the horse racing industry and save up to 60,000 jobs?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I neglected to welcome the member opposite to his new role as labour critic.

I haven't heard that number before but what I can tell you is that we have been clear that modernizing the system and integrating the horse racing industry with the gaming industry has been a priority. That is the instruction that we have given to OLG. That's the conversation we've been having. We have been clear, since I came into this office, that having a sustainable horse racing industry is our objective. It's interesting to me that the member opposite would not be interested in change and would not be interested in modernization when his leader stands up, day after day, and asks for holus-bolus change that would undermine all sorts of services across the province. The fact is we want a sustainable horse racing industry and we're working to—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Final supplementary?

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Back to the Premier: Premier, the manner and time frame with which the McGuinty-Wynne government terminated the Slots at Racetracks partnership has created a crisis throughout rural Ontario. Your decision has led to a complete and total exodus of investment, as more than 3,000 owners have fled the industry, taking with them approximately \$1 billion in combined investments.

Premier, you have nearly 600,000 men and women out of work and are racing towards a \$300-billion debt. Is it because these jobs and investments are in rural Ontario that you don't give a damn about them?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** For the sake of decorum, I would ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I'll withdraw.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I will answer the substance and not the mean-spiritedness of that question. The reality is that I am committed to having a sustainable horse racing industry in this province. The fact is, having committed \$180 million over the next three years will mean that we will have that. I have asked the panel for a report on a five-year program so that we can have that program in place.

The reality is that the SARP program, as it was in place, was not transparent. It was not accountable. There was a fractious industry that lost track of the client. It had to be changed. We're changing it, and we admitted that there needed to be a sober second look at the process. We've done that. The panel is giving its recommendations. We're going to have a sustainable horse racing industry and it's going to be part of the overall gaming strategy in the province. Again, I would think the member opposite should be supportive of that.

#### GOVERNMENT'S AGENDA

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. Later today, the Premier and I will be meeting in person but I want to be very clear that I'll be saying later today exactly what I've been saying since the House returned: People expect the government to deliver results; results that create jobs for youth, cut home care wait times, lower auto insurance costs and make government accountable.

Is the Premier ready to deliver on these results for people?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Absolutely. I want results for the people of Ontario, and that's why we're making the investments that we are. That's why we're developing programs to invest in the people who need support, to invest in infrastructure and to invest in businesses so that we can get the economy going and we can continue to create jobs. That's the objective of the measures that we put in our budget, and I look forward to our meeting later today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** People have heard the government make promises but when it comes to actually delivering results, they see the same old spin from the Liberals and nothing getting better for them. For example, drivers paying the highest auto insurance premiums in Canada are still waiting for relief. They want to know if their rates are going to go down at all this year or just keep climbing. Will the Premier commit to an actual decline in rates this year for good drivers in Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The Minister of Finance has spoken to this publicly, that we are going to be working with the industry to move those costs. That will bring the overall average costs of auto insurance down. We're committed to doing that. We have said we are going to do it within a reasonable time frame. It's not the kind of thing that can happen overnight, but we are committed to doing it. We will see those reductions.

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The fact is, we have done this before. When we came into office, auto insurance was, similarly, a very difficult challenge for people. The rates went down—on average, I think it was 11% over a number of years. We will continue to remove those costs so that auto insurance rates can go down. It's a priority for us; we've been clear about that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Another example: Young people in Ontario are facing double-digit unemployment, and they want to get out of their parents' basements and into the workforce. We made it clear that we expected to see results for young people when we put forward a plan to get those results in the budget. The government promised them by September. They even tried campaigning on the promise in the by-elections.

When will the Premier actually get started on the First Start proposal that the NDP put forward and start delivering for young people who are desperate for work? Will they start delivering those results—maybe this month, maybe next month? When? Maybe next year?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Just to go back to the first part of the question, there actually are companies in the province that have already announced a reduction in auto insurance rates: CAA and Co-operators have put out releases. So we are going down that road.

On the issue of youth employment, the leader of the third party knows this is a priority of mine, and I was glad that she put it forward as one of her priorities. In fact, the applications for the youth employment fund are available for the end of this month. We are taking action immediately, and young people will have an opportunity to take advantage of those challenges.

#### GOVERNMENT'S AGENDA

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also to the Premier, and I'm going to continue on this theme of results. Across Ontario, seniors facing health problems tell us that they would prefer getting support at home



rather than languishing in hospital beds. It's better for them and it's better for the health care system, I think everybody realizes that. Yet, seniors are waiting weeks, even months, to get the home care support that they need in this province. The government promised to boost home care support. When will we see wait times for home care actually start to go down for people?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** As the leader of the third party knows, we made a commitment to put, I think it's three times the amount that she suggests—

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Six times.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** —six times the amount that she suggested that we put into home care. Those dollars will be flowing and—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, come to order.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, what we want is reduced wait times and we want those services to be delivered in a timely manner.

We also want the right services to be delivered, and I know the leader of the third party understands that there's a whole range of services that people need in order to be able to stay in their homes—some of them are medical, some of them are non-medical, some of them are different kinds of support. What I've heard from my seniors' advisory group over the years is that it is those acute medical issues that need to be attended to, but they also need some support for the things that need to be done around the house, in the community, that will allow them to stay in their homes.

So we want to make sure that they get care in a timely way and that they get the right kind of care.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Well, Speaker, I hate to tell the Premier this, but it's not about spending; it's about actually getting results with those investments. When it comes to getting results, in the lead-up to the spring budget, we made it pretty clear that we need a fair and balanced approach to balancing our books.

The government plans to create \$1.3 billion in new tax loopholes for corporations so they can write off the HST on wining and dining their clients. We thought that that was just a cost that Ontarians simply cannot afford at this point. Earlier this week, the Premier said she was going to "keep pursuing that."

When are we going to get some results when it comes to these corporate tax loopholes, or at least an update on whether or not the chase is ongoing?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let me just talk about results, because I think the leader of the third party is framing a number of issues within this question of results. I just want to give her some numbers and to say that it is necessary to spend more money on home care, because there are more people who need home care. So it is actually about spending more money and it is about spending it smartly. It's about investing in those services.

In 2003, the number of clients served in community settings in Ontario was 348,110. In 2012, that number is

637,727. So we have been getting results. We will continue on that trajectory. But having said that we need to invest \$185 million acknowledges that there is an acute need for that kind of investment because of the increased numbers.

In terms of the tax issue that the leader of the third party raised, I know that the Minister of Finance will continue to pursue that with the federal government.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The bottom line is that people want to see results, not political games and empty promises. They want action that will create jobs, that will make life affordable, that will reduce the time that they spend waiting for the health supports that they need and that will take a balanced approach to balancing our books.

They've heard the Premier's promises, and what they want to know—and what I'll be discussing later today with the Premier—is: When will she actually deliver?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let me just review, Mr. Speaker. We've got two companies that have said that they are reducing their auto insurance rates. We've got hundreds of thousands of people more getting community care, and there will be more. We've got a youth employment fund that will be available for young people at the end of this month.

I would suggest that those are results. Those are changes and improvements that will make a huge difference in people's lives. I'm interested in results, and I look forward to our conversation, but make no mistake: We have delivered results and will continue to do so.

## RED TAPE REDUCTION

**Mr. Todd Smith:** My question is for the agriculture minister this morning. In the words of an egg farmer in Hastings county, "Red tape is killing agriculture." The time it takes for a farmer to get the permits and approvals he needs from your ministry to build an extension onto an existing barn can take months or even years. The red tape runaround is discouraging innovation, growth and expansion for the family farm and for agribusinesses.

Farmers know better than most how much the cost of doing business will go through the roof every time a bureaucrat carrying a clipboard walks up their driveway. Minister, if a farmer wants to extend a barn to the same length as his existing barns—a project that will create about \$250,000 in construction work for local contractors—why should he have to wait through not one but two building seasons to get an approval from your ministry?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I just want to acknowledge that the member opposite raises a very real issue in terms of the need to look at regulations and make sure that we have the right regulations. Remember, a regulation has to balance the business imperatives and safety imperatives.

We have a one-window process. We have a regulation reduction process that is making changes. We replaced

two outdated egg regulations with a single regulation that reflects industry practices. We're streamlining packaging and grading standards to give fruit and vegetable growers and packers more choice in how they market their products to meet new market demands.

We are making changes that are real, but at all times we are going to balance the market imperatives and the safety imperatives.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Minister, I spoke with hundreds of farmers just a couple of weeks ago at the recent Hastings County Plowing Match and Farm Show in the Stirling area. They're insulted that you've reduced the role of agriculture to a part-time position. They're disgusted with the notion that the number one industry in Ontario is nothing more than photo-ops in red rubber boots by a downtown Toronto Premier who thinks a furrow is an expensive coat.

Minister, the fact of the matter is that there is no reason why it should take more than two years to get these kinds of projects approved. The overregulation of our family farms and agribusinesses is getting worse, not better; 77% of farmers indicated that their red tape burden is getting heavier, not lighter, in Ontario under your government. The number of forms, questionnaires and studies is making it nearly impossible for them to grow.

Minister, why is your government intent on putting our farmers in Ontario out of business?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I have to say, the young people to whom I was handing out 4-H awards the other day didn't seem to think that it was a problem that the Premier was paying attention to the work that they were doing.

Again, I would just say that this question from the member opposite shines a light on the fact that the party opposite wants to divide. The party opposite doesn't want to help people understand that we live in one province, we live in one Ontario, and that people who grow our food and produce and process our food are integrally connected to the people who live in our suburban and our urban areas. If we forget that and if we undermine that connection, then we are doing future generations a huge disservice.

The farmers I have talked to want a high profile for agri-food. They want everyone in the province to understand that it's a priority of this government, and it is.

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## CANCER SCREENING

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est pour la ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée. Almost everyone in Ontario has had their life touched by cancer. We rely on our cancer system and this is something that we all value, but for 3,500 Ontarians who have received letters or phone calls telling them that their diagnostic images may have been read incorrectly, this trust has been shaken.

People are telling the Canadian Cancer Society that they're worried that they can't trust the results that they're getting. Will the minister agree to call in Ontario's Ombudsman to start rebuilding people's trust in our health care system?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I expect the highest quality of care from our physicians and from our hospitals, and I know everyone else in this province does as well. We take these questions very seriously, and I know that Trillium Health is reviewing 3,500 individual cases to ensure that any patients who need follow-up care get that follow-up care.

I have spoken to the CEO of the hospital. I've spoken to the chief of radiology and the chief of staff of the hospital. They have a strong, and getting stronger, quality assurance in place. I know that they, as much as we, want to get this review done as quickly as possible.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** So far we've learned of a woman that was given a clean bill of health but now finds out that she has a stage-4 tumor. We've heard another woman say that she received a notice for her husband, who has been—clear bill of health, and eight months later, died of stomach cancer.

The government knew about this in August, but we are only finding out about this now. The minister doesn't have to reinvent the wheel to learn what was wrong and rebuild confidence in our health care system. She can call in the Ombudsman right now to start getting answers and to give people faith that there is an impartial, non-political advocate in their corner. Will the minister call the Ombudsman to start looking at this now?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I know that the member opposite does in fact know that our health care system is amongst the best in the world. People who get cancer in Ontario have amongst the highest survival rates of anyone in the world, and I know she would not want to shake the confidence of people in our health care system.

In fact, there is an external review under way at Trillium Health. Dr. Brian Yemen, from McMaster, has come in with a team of 20 radiologists so they can review these files as quickly as possible. They are hopeful that the 3,500 files will have been reviewed by the middle of October. As those files are reviewed, patients will be notified whether they can rest easy or whether in fact follow-up care is required.

## MINIMUM WAGE

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** My question is for the Minister of Labour. Minister, as you're aware, my riding of York South-Weston is home to a large community of newcomers. Newcomers face a variety of challenges entering the workforce and finding good-paying jobs. Many of my constituents are working in low-paying jobs and living off the minimum wage. A number of organizations that I know very well and have met many times are rallying to have the minimum wage raised. They held a province-wide day of action just this past weekend.



Speaker, through you to the minister, when so many Ontarians rely on the minimum wage in order to afford the basics of day-to-day life, what is the ministry doing to provide some assistance and help those who need it the most?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I want to thank the member for asking a very important question. She's right: In fact, there are too many Ontarians who live on minimum wage, and we have to do everything in our capacity to increase and enhance their livelihood. That's why it was extremely unfortunate that during the previous Conservative government, for nine years straight, there was a freeze on the minimum wage in this province. Not a single penny was raised; it was stuck at \$6.85.

I'm very proud and our government is very proud that, when we came into government, we raised the minimum wage by 50%, from \$6.85 to \$10.25. We did that during the good economic times and during the great recession. We did not stop from raising the minimum wage to \$10.25, making it one of the highest in the country.

Now, the question is, Speaker, what do we do next? What direction do we need to go in next? That's why we have created a minimum wage advisory panel that is consulting Ontarians across the province to give advice to the government.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** Thank you to the minister for that answer. Recently, there has been a lot of attention from the media with respect to minimum wage, and everyone seems to be coming out on one of two sides. The Workers' Action Centre is very active on one side, and they have actually made the 14th day of every month their day of action to raise the minimum wage to \$14 an hour. The other side of the argument is that further raising the minimum wage would be troublesome for some businesses that employ these workers, resulting in less jobs for minimum wage workers.

The minimum wage advisory panel, before making their recommendations, will need to ensure that all viewpoints are taken into consideration. The needs of the workers and the needs of the employers need to be heard on this important issue.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: How will the panel seek to achieve this?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** This is a very important conversation that is taking place across the province, and I am very encouraged to see representatives from all sides taking part. That's why we have ensured that the panel is a representative panel. It is led by Professor Anil Verma, an expert in human resources and industrial relations from the University of Toronto. But then, we also have representatives from unions, anti-poverty advocates, students and small businesses so that we've got all points of view taken into account. They represent the breadth of the province from Windsor to Ottawa and all other communities in between.

The panel is travelling the province right now. In fact, there's a consultation taking place this Thursday in Mississauga, and I encourage members from those com-

munities to participate in the process. We also have a dedicated website, [Ontario.ca/minimumwagereview](http://Ontario.ca/minimumwagereview), where there is information, and folks can write in to the minimum wage at [Ontario.ca](http://Ontario.ca).

## ENERGY POLICIES

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** My question is for the Premier. Premier, as of last Wednesday, Ontario ratepayers are paying wind turbines not to produce a single megawatt of energy now. But your government is still moving ahead, intent on building thousands of turbines across rural Ontario. How can you justify building more turbines in unwilling host communities when you're paying the ones already built not to produce energy? Industries can't afford it, families can't afford it and seniors on fixed incomes cannot afford it.

Premier, will you finally admit that your government's green energy scheme is a failure and call for an immediate moratorium on industrial wind turbine development?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I would suggest to the member opposite that an industry that has 2,700 clean tech firms and employs 65,000 people in the clean technology sector is not a failure. That is a huge success.

On top of that, Mr. Speaker, we knew that the coal plants needed to be shut down, and we knew that we needed to jump-start—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. I just want to make a comment. Earlier, I asked you to raise the debate by using people's titles or their riding, and now I'm asking you to try to stop shouting people down. It boils down to just simple decency. Thank you.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

We calculate that \$4.4 billion has been avoided in health care and environmental costs by shutting down coal plants: 668 fewer premature deaths per year; 928 fewer hospital admissions per year; 1,100 fewer emergency room visits per year. I think that those kinds of results and that kind of success speak to the efficacy of the direction that we've taken. We've jump-started an industry, we've created jobs and we've improved the health of thousands of people across the province.

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**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Premier, no one is buying your government's rhetoric anymore. The fact is, your energy ministry is an absolute unstable mess. You have had colleagues stand up in this House and say that good things grow in Ontario, but sadly, the only thing growing in Ontario right now are hydro rates, unemployment rates and the number of industries running away from this province because they can't afford your energy rates. The number one issue in my constituency offices is the stress over Hydro One's ever-increasing hydro bills. It's shameful.

Premier, we have had enough. Will your government finally position energy as an economic driver as opposed to a policy that is driving away industry from Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I would just ask that the member opposite talk to some parents of children with asthma and ask them what they think about having cleaner air in the province.

We have acknowledged that we need a better process for siting these large energy infrastructures; we've been clear about that. The Minister of Energy is developing and has announced a better process for siting those pieces of infrastructure. We acknowledge that. But the fact is, we needed to jump-start this industry. It has created jobs and it has cleaned up the air. You cannot put a price on that.

### AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

**Mr. John Vanthof:** My question is to the Premier and Minister of Agriculture and Food. For the past 10 years, Ontario's small processors—not just the farmers, but small processors—have been under a lot of pressure due to constant regulation changes that are not really practical for them, and in most cases nor do they improve food safety. In fact, many mom-and-pop abattoirs have closed simply out of frustration. In 1998, there were 267 abattoirs, and now there are half. You can't have local food without local processors, especially in rural areas. What will you, as Minister of Agriculture, do to ensure that small processors can keep their doors open?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I want to thank the member opposite for his question, because he's right that we need to continue to look at regulations, particularly around small abattoirs. He's absolutely right, because what I have heard from food processors is that some of those regulations are very onerous for some of the small abattoirs. We are looking at that. But again, I want to just be clear, as I said to the member from the official opposition, that regulation is always a balance between the business imperative and safety. We are not going to put people's safety at risk. We are going to make sure that all of the rules that need to be in place are in place, but I acknowledge that there are some small businesses that we need to look at—if there's a way to lessen that burden.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Once again to the Premier: I think no one in this House wants to jeopardize food safety, and that's not the issue here. But currently, the regulations facing processors, large and small, are one-size-fits-all, and that just doesn't work for small mom-and-pop processors, the ones who are processing local foods. And this is a case where it's a good thing for the Premier and the Minister of Agriculture to be the same person, because if there's one thing the Premier can do is push it through. So once again, what will the Premier do to ensure that small processors are not buried by red tape?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** As I said, I understand the concern, and I have heard the concern. We're continually reviewing and adjusting the Meat Inspection Program

and policies, and we've listened to the meat plant operators. We're proposing some changes to the regulation that will not compromise food safety. As I said, we understand that this is a concern, particularly for small abattoirs, but I will never sign off on anything that will compromise people's safety. There has to be the balance between the business and the safety. We're making changes, we're proposing changes, but we are going to make sure that those safety regulations are in place.

### SENIOR CITIZENS

**Mr. Grant Crack:** My question is to the minister responsible for seniors affairs. Over the next 20 years, communities across Ontario will face a significant shift in demographics. The number of seniors aged 65 and over—of which I will be one—in Ontario will double to 4.2 million persons.

Last month I attended, along with many of my colleagues, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario's annual general meeting in Ottawa, and it was made clear to us that municipal leaders are facing not only new opportunities, but challenges presented by this significant demographic shift. Can the minister inform this House of what our government is doing in taking action to support our seniors in communities across this great province of Ontario?

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** I would like to thank the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell for his important question. Yes, while I was attending the AMO conference, I met with a number of leaders from the municipal sector and stakeholders. I was also very pleased to launch the Finding the Right Fit: Age-Friendly Community Planning guide. It is an invaluable guide which was extremely well received by both municipal leaders and seniors stakeholders.

Every distinguished member of this Legislature has also received individual copies. I hope that they will enjoy it, and they can order some more. But first, let me say that age-friendly communities respond to both the opportunities and the challenges of an aging population, and I look forward to providing further details in the supplementary question.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** Thank you, Minister, for the update. I did have the privilege to serve as mayor of Alexandria, and then North Glengarry, for 11 years.

**Interjection:** A beautiful town.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** It's a great town in the great riding of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell.

It was so refreshing in 2003 to finally have a government that actively supported municipalities across this great province in planning for communities and allowing seniors to continue to contribute in all aspects of their life. I can tell you that the nine mayors and councils in Glengarry–Prescott–Russell certainly appreciate the good work that this government has done, because we do have a very high, large population of seniors in our riding.



Recently, I had the honour of having the minister responsible for seniors affairs in my riding to visit Résidence St-Mathieu in Hammond and the manager, Nicole Normand. We discussed many of the challenges that were being faced by seniors. I'm just asking, through you, Speaker, if the minister could just update us on some of the details of that valuable tool.

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** Indeed, it was a real pleasure to visit with the honourable member in his riding, meeting many seniors wishing to remain in their own homes and in their own communities for as long as possible.

The principles of this guide include both physical and social dimensions that contribute to independent aging and living, such as outdoor spaces, transportation, housing and social participation. The way it helps local municipalities is in this way: assessing community dimensions, defining local principles, conducting community needs assessments and developing, implementing and evaluating their own community-based action plan.

Supporting age-friendly communities is a key component of Ontario's Action Plan for Seniors, helping seniors stay healthy, active and engaged in their communities for as long as possible. It is my interest and the interest of this government.

#### ENDANGERED SPECIES

**Mr. Bill Walker:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, we need to fix the Endangered Species Act. In 2003, there were 19 species listed. Today, there are 121, and I dare say that a profitable farmer is one of those, sadly. Your administration has obviously politicized the ESA rules by basing its decisions on supposition, not on verifiable science. When a farmer is unable to harvest hay because your supposition deems his farmland an endangered turtle habitat, then you're grinding our production to a halt.

Premier, this overzealous act is out of control and desperately needs reforming. Will you quit your war against farmers and commit today to fixing the ESA?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Natural Resources.

**Hon. David Oraziotti:** I appreciate the question from the member. The member knows full well the importance that we place on farming and agriculture in the province of Ontario. I want to commend the Premier for her leadership on this issue. I also want to commend the Premier on her commitment to reforming and changing the ESA. After a number of years of implementation of this legislation, I think all members in the Legislature agree that the changes that were brought recently, this spring, to the ESA are more reflective of the views and values of Ontarians and the values and views of everyone in this Legislature.

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I say to the member opposite that the Endangered Species Act is a very effective piece of legislation. Let's not forget that it continues to be the gold standard in North America for protecting species at risk in this province.

But we've now made changes to it that make the implementation of this legislation much more effective and much more balanced.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** We'll try this again to the Premier: During these challenging economic times, Ontarians cannot afford runaway regulations. It's disturbing to see this government ignoring the call for transparency and accountability in the Endangered Species Act.

May I suggest other measures as outlined in Paths to Prosperity: Make analyzing the socio-economic impact of changes to the ESA mandatory, publish the scientific analysis along with the proposed rules, and make the committee an advisory board to the minister, with the minister having final say on decisions related to the ESA.

Premier, our hard-working farmers want to know: Will you make these common-sense proposals a reality?

**Hon. David Oraziotti:** Again, we have listened to the farmers and the agricultural community in this province, and we've made those necessary exemptions so that we can continue to work for solutions that deal with endangered species.

This is a complex issue. The member opposite wants to try to simplify this issue. But if we're going to have legislation in this province that is in fact the gold standard in North America for protecting species at risk, we need to find the right balance, and it means working with all of the sectors.

We've put together a working group at our ministry that includes a broad cross-section of individuals and organizations to address this issue, and we've reached a fantastic balance, I think, on this issue. The farmers know that. We're listening to them. We're working with them to ensure that they can continue to ensure that their livelihood is protected in this province and that we can also protect the species that are at risk in the province of Ontario.

#### WATER QUALITY

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. On Tuesday morning of last week, over 200 litres of diesel fuel leaked from a Sun-Canadian pipeline in Sarnia, but the Ministry of the Environment didn't call for the closure of the downstream drinking water intake pipes until more than 10 hours after the leak. Why didn't the ministry act before residents of that community noticed diesel floating in the river and a nasty smell in their drinking water?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** As the member would know, under the Environmental Protection Act, the company, which is Sun-Canadian, is responsible specifically for notifying the Ministry of the Environment of the spill, and the municipality within the boundaries wherein the spill happens to have occurred.

The spill did reach the St. Clair River via the Cole drain, and the ministry notified downstream drinking

water plants to monitor their intakes. The operators for both Wallaceburg and Walpole Island plants decided to close the intakes as a precautionary measure.

The ministry also notified other downstream users, including First Nations communities and Michigan authorities. Environment Canada, TSSA and the National Energy Board all have been notified. Ministry staff attended a multi-agency meeting with city officials, including the mayor, the fire department and police—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Answer.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** —to discuss the status and the next steps.

I will wait for the supplementary.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The point is, all of this activity took over 10 hours to actually take place.

Thousands of residents in Wallaceburg and Walpole Island First Nation depend on the St. Clair River for their drinking water. Shockingly, this isn't the first time that they've had their drinking water contaminated by chemical spills. Worse yet, the warning system failed people, needlessly exposing children and elders to contaminated drinking water for several hours.

The people of Sarnia deserve to know what went wrong last week and what the government will do to take real action to prevent future spills and, more importantly, to protect the drinking water of downstream communities. What exactly will they do?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Ministry staff are continuing to monitor the company's progress with the cleanup. Additional catch basins were cleaned out overnight. Cleaning of the storm sewer was occurring overnight, and water treatment plants were reopened on September 11.

If there are any incidents that would require, let's say, an investigation which would result ultimately in charges being laid—the ministry always ensures that there's an investigation that takes place after each one of these incidents. I can assure you that that kind of investigation, should it produce any particular offence against the laws of the province of Ontario, will result in the ministry proceeding with the necessary action against those who would be responsible.

### CYCLING POLICIES

**Mr. John Fraser:** My question is for the Minister of Transportation. Our government is making record investments in Ontario's highway infrastructure which will benefit my riding of Ottawa South. My constituents rely on safe roads for all vehicles, from cars to bicycles, to get to work and to school. There are many people in my riding who cycle, and this has many benefits to our environment as well as helping to reduce congestion on our roads. I am pleased that cycling has been a priority for this government.

Cycling has a central role to play in reducing gridlock, improving air quality and building stronger, healthier communities. I understand that the government has re-

cently announced its new cycling strategy. Could you please update the House on this new strategy? I know this is something my constituents would want to hear about.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** It's great to be joined in the House by the member for Ottawa South, who has a long history of being a cycling advocate. As I've said to my colleagues on both sides of the House from Ottawa, Ottawa is really one of our most dynamic communities in cycling. They were heavily involved in the development of this policy, and we're very pleased with that.

This is one of the most comprehensive policy strategies to come out. It was started by the Premier when she was Minister of Transportation. We've evolved into a very exciting new partnership, because not one order of government can build cycling infrastructure or develop the rules. This is a partnership with municipalities, the Canadian Automobile Association, the Ontario Trucking Association, many regional advocacy groups and bicycle retailers to look at safety. Initiatives include everything from strategies for stronger penalties—I'll conclude by saying—to organizing our existing infrastructure and additional infrastructure investments.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John Fraser:** Thank you to the minister for that update. I'm glad to see that our government is encouraging cycling as a viable means of moving people around our communities. One topic of concern that I've heard from my constituents is the issue of dooring, which occurs when a parked motor vehicle's door is opened into the path of an oncoming cyclist. This is dangerous and has resulted in many injuries. In 2012, there were 104 convictions for dooring incidents registered against drivers and passengers throughout Ontario. This is a concern for all cyclists.

Could the Minister of Transportation please update the House on the government's position regarding dooring?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** The minister's working group on cycling is a really interesting group across industry. Dooring has been identified as one of the big challenges, so we will be looking at this at multiple layers, which is the reason for a community-centred approach to this. We have a one-year action plan coming up and we expect that dooring will be part of it. It will involve the Attorney General of the province, a former mayor and big cycling advocate, who will be working with us on the laws and regulations. The CAA is part of this, as is the Ontario Trucking Association, so they will be working on educating drivers on dooring, as it's highly dangerous.

We've also been working with municipalities. Councillor Layton from the city of Toronto and Councillor Chernushenko from the city of Ottawa are also members of the working group. Members of other parties—we're very proud this is a non-partisan approach.

In conclusion, I also want to thank MPP Fife and my friend from Kitchener; the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka; and my parliamentary assistant, the member for Eglinton–Lawrence, who have the parliamentary cycling caucus going, and—



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

### HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** My question is to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. Minister, while the horse racing industry languishes in limbo, seeking leadership for the last two years, you have been pretending to care about rural Ontario and the loss of 9,000 jobs in the horse racing industry thus far. You and your panel of three put on a good pony show at over half a million dollars' cost to taxpayers, but what have you done as Premier and part-time agriculture minister to address the crisis facing the horse racing industry in this province?

1130

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm very pleased about this renewed interest in agriculture and food, and I look forward to having questions when it's not the day before the International Plowing Match, Mr. Speaker.

Let me just say that we have made huge progress on moving to a sustainable horse racing industry. I've acknowledged that the original changes to the Slots at Racetracks Program were not as well thought through as they needed to be. My predecessor, the Minister of Community and Social Services, began a process whereby he put a panel in place to take that second look at how we could have that sustainable industry. We put \$180 million in place for transition funding for three years. The panel is going to come forward with a five-year plan.

We want a sustainable industry, and the way that's going to happen is that we're going to have an industry that is integrated with the overall gaming strategy in the province. I'm very proud of the work that we've done, and we'll have a sustainable industry going forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** Well, Minister, if you've read the Good Book, you would know there are four horsemen when the apocalypse is to come. Given your financial policies and now your lack of action for rural Ontario, and the horse racing industry in particular, Ontario is witnessing the apocalypse of financial ruin. You and your panel seem to be symbolic of the four horsemen.

What are you going to do to save the horse racing industry in this province from the apocalypse and save over 50,000 jobs from being eliminated from rural Ontario?

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** My friend the Minister of Community and Social Services, who is much more of a theologian than I am, says that the first thing that Noah did when he got off the boat was to plant a vineyard. But I was going to say, Mr. Speaker, that we have the three horsemen—Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Snobelen and Mr. Wilkinson—who are working with us to make sure that we make the decisions to have in place a sustainable horse racing industry.

I have visited horsemen; I've been to the tracks. I've talked to people about what's needed. I know there was a lot of disruption in the sector. I know there was a lot of angst. I also know that they were concerned because there was no integration between the horse racing industry and the overall gaming strategy. That has changed now. That integration is happening, and with the advice of the panel, those three horsemen, we're going to have a sustainable horse racing industry in Ontario.

### LAND USE PLANNING

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** My question is to the Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs.

There are large-scale condo developments proposed and already under way across from High Park, which is a precious resource not only to Torontonians but to all Ontarians. There are serious concerns about the environmental impact of these developments. Already, 200-year-old black oak trees—they're heritage trees—across the street are gone. The development also impacts nesting birds, migratory patterns and various other human health and safety concerns.

This is yet another example of undemocratic decisions made by the OMB in favour of developers. Why has the minister failed to ensure the protection of this environmentally significant park and its boundary areas?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I thank the member for her question. This actually has not been raised with my staff yet, but I appreciate the question and I certainly have heard from municipalities from across Ontario about the planning system and their concerns with it.

I want to publicly thank the member from Trinity-Spadina for the work that he's done on this file. I know he wrote an editorial this morning regarding this important issue, and my ministry, obviously, is still reviewing it.

I would like to remind the member that the city of Toronto already has the authority to establish local appeals boards under the Planning Act. In fact, only last week, Councillor Adam Vaughan publicly mused about the possibility of Toronto creating a local appeals body. Strengthening our land use planning system is certainly a priority, and we believe good land use planning ensures long-term economic prosperity, environmental health, which I think is what you're raising today, and the social well-being of all Ontarians. That's why only a few weeks ago, I announced a consultation, and I'll speak more about it in the supplementary.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** The minister knows full well that what Adam Vaughan is talking about, and others, are minor variances and not major changes, and that the OMB does rule supreme. My friend here wrote about this very fact, and she should read the article.

This is a matter relating to environmental protection. The province has designated sections of High Park as environmentally significant due to the rare black oak savannah. The OMB does not have expertise in this area.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** The city has—

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** No, they don't.

Despite promising more environmental expertise on the OMB board, this government has failed to deliver any significant reform of the OMB after over 10 years in office. The government is allowing the OMB again and again to override local environmental concerns.

Will this government protect High Park or is even High Park for sale to developers because of this government?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** Speaker, when I was at the AMO convention, I announced an upcoming review about consultations with regard to Ontario land use planning because we want to find better ways to reform land use planning, and we want to work better with our municipalities across Ontario because we want to make them livable communities. I look forward to working with the members of the third party with regard to consultations.

We believe the OMB provides an important role in hearing land use planning acts and we certainly want to balance that with local planning decisions and community interests. Certainly, I look forward to making this system better, and I look forward to your input in the consultation period.

#### NOT-FOR-PROFIT CORPORATIONS

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** My question is to the Minister of Consumer Services. Minister, over the summer months I met with some of the not-for-profit organizations that are operating in my riding. There is a variety of them providing essential and supportive services to residents in my riding and across Ontario. I met organizations focused on advocacy to educational opportunities to recreation. They not only vary in their focus and specializations but also in the size and complexity of the organizations. While providing me with an opportunity to learn about their significant contributions to our community, they raised questions about the not-for-profit act and its requirements.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister, can the minister please share with the House more information on this act and what requirements will not-for-profits face under this legislation?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I'd like to thank the member from Ottawa-Orléans for this very important question. As I've shared with the House before, there are approximately 52,000 not-for-profit corporations currently operating in Ontario, offering a variety of services and meeting the needs of Ontarians in very unique ways. Not-for-profits not only help people in their everyday lives, but they're an important element of job growth and economic development in our province.

The new act will provide a more modern legislative framework to meet the unique needs of this growing sector. The Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, once proclaimed, will make it easier for not-for-profits to operate in today's dynamic market. It will enhance corporate governance, accountability and transparency. It will simplify incorporation processes, it will better protect directors and officers from personal liability, and it will clarify that not-for-profits can engage in commercial activities if their activities support not-for-profit purposes.

#### VISITOR

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Before we leave, we do have a visitor in the east members' gallery. That visitor is a former member from Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh in the 38th and Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry in the 39th, Mr. Jim Brownell.

The member from Northumberland-Quinte West on a point of order.

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** Mr. Speaker, I know it's not a point of order, but it saddens me to announce the passing of Howard Sheppard, MPP, this morning. I just wanted to let the House know that our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Bernice, and with his family. I just want to extend that to all members.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member is correct. That's not a point of order, but I do also want to remind all members that there is a co-operative effort in this House that we will continue to honour all of those who have passed away as august members of this special place.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands adjourned until Wednesday, September 18, at 9 o'clock.

*The House adjourned at 1140.*



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

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Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
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Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
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Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	

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Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Holyday, Douglas C. (PC)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
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Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
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<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
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MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
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McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
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McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
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Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
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<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
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<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
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Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Qadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
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<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
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Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
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Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
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Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
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<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
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Rob E. Milligan, Shafiq Qaadi  
Jonah Schein  
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Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament



Assemblée législative  
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Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 18 September 2013**

**Mercredi 18 septembre 2013**

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 18 September 2013

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 18 septembre 2013

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS AMENDMENT ACT

(LEAVES TO HELP FAMILIES), 2013

LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT

LA LOI SUR LES NORMES D'EMPLOI  
(CONGÉS POUR AIDER LES FAMILLES)

Resuming the debate adjourned on September 12, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 21, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 in respect of family caregiver, critically ill child care and crime-related child death or disappearance leaves of absence / *Projet de loi 21, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2000 sur les normes d'emploi en ce qui concerne le congé familial pour les aidants naturels, le congé pour soins à un enfant gravement malade et le congé en cas de décès ou de disparition d'un enfant dans des circonstances criminelles.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Good morning, Speaker, and thank you very much for allowing me to speak to Bill 21, the family caregiver leave act.

I believe there was a previous incarnation of this bill, Bill 30, back before the infamous prorogation of 2012. However, the government seems to have fit this one into its list of priorities to bring back—interesting. I was really hopeful that there would be an economic development bill or something before the House this morning.

The Premier was in Mitchell yesterday, as were a lot of other political leaders. Not that I'm a political leader, but I was there too.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Yes, they certainly will, I say to the Attorney General.

It is pretty clear that people are looking for some action, here in the province of Ontario, when it comes to our economy.

This bill, while it's a bill we support, really is a vacuous piece of legislation; there's not much in it. It does allow for up to eight weeks of unpaid—I want to

stress that—up to eight weeks of unpaid leave. It also states that they must take that time in increments of not less than one week.

Now, there are all kinds of problems with this bill. At the same time, we are supporting it because we want to see this get to committee—although, I must say, what committee is it going to get to, because all the committees are jammed up right now? But we do want to see this bill get to committee, so that whatever improvements can be made will be made. Hopefully, the government will co-operate on some of those changes.

The part I was talking about, the requirement that all leave must be taken in increments of not less than one week: If anybody has ever been dealing with someone who is suffering from cancer, battling cancer, and has to go on a regular basis for treatments—I recall my brother-in-law many years ago; he did pass away from cancer, but over periods of time he had to go daily from Barry's Bay to Ottawa for treatments, and back, of course, on the same day.

Having had the ability to take weeks at a time would not have been very helpful to anybody who was helping Eric with his treatments. However, being able to take a day here and a day there would have been far more workable in that situation. So that's an issue that I think the government might want to take a look at in this bill.

But the fundamental problem in the bill is one that I've heard my friends from the third party talk about over and over again, and I have spoken about it here as well in the context of a two-minute hit question-and-comment response, is that this is all lovely stuff, I say to the member from Peterborough; not Mitchell, the member from Peterborough—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** The Minister of Rural Affairs is having a conversation there—he's not bothering me—with the Minister of Correctional Services. They're not bothering me, but from time to time they do try to take me off my topic. Not today, though.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order, please. I can't hear the member.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Am I still on, Speaker? Thank you.

The fundamental problem, as I said, is that they came out with this bill, they want to appear to be doing something very, very kind and nice for people, but they don't let their money do the talking. They throw the bill out there, but they want employers and everyone else to absorb any of the challenges.



Now, to be fair—

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** No, it's unpaid.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Well, you still have to replace workers, I say to the Minister of—Consumer Services, is it?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Yes.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** You still have to replace workers. If you're in a very small business—I was in a small business for many years, and I recognize that if one of your key people was off for a period of time, you had to replace them. At the same time—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'm glad you two are having a conversation amongst yourselves.

Remember me? We'll go through the Chair, won't we? Thank you.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Not only do I remember you, Speaker, I will never forget you.

I say to the minister, through you, Speaker, that in the case of a key employee, I would have made every effort to ensure—in fact, I would have made sure—that that job was there for them, because in a small business, your key employees are like family. So when they're suffering, you're suffering too. So I might ask the question, then what's the need of the legislation if you're also relying on the goodwill of employers?

But what you're doing is trying to throw something out there and portray it as something it's not. You should be working with the federal government to come up with a piece of legislation that is supported by them, is coordinated with them through the Employment Insurance Act, so that it functions seamlessly.

It's okay for you to throw this out there and say, "Let's be nice to people who have family challenges," or—there are many, many different circumstances; I understand this and I won't articulate them all, because we don't really have enough time. But there are a number of circumstances in which this bill applies, not just for people who are ill, but there are other circumstances, where a child has been a victim of a crime etc. It's a laudable goal from that perspective.

However, again, here's this Liberal government who has no problem spending money, because—good lord, Speaker, they've got us so far in the hole, I can't even see the light at the top. We're so far down there, we can't even see the light. I hope that some day soon—and that's a little cowboy song, "Someday Soon"—you people over there actually see the light and recognize what a disaster you have perpetrated on the province and the people who live here in Ontario.

0910

I hope that you change your tune so that your complete commitment to deficit financing at the expense of—you know, this family caregiver leave act is about taking care of others. What the heck have you done to our children and our grandchildren? What kind of Ontario are you leaving them? That's what I ask you. Why aren't you doing something to ensure that the next generation has an Ontario they can be proud of, one where they get up in

the morning and know that they have a good job to go to? That's what you should be thinking about here in the province of Ontario, you folks over there on the other side. You shouldn't be bringing out this smug piece of legislation to try to make yourselves look good; you should do something that's going to make it good for the people who come after us, for our children, our grandchildren, who are going to be struggling down the road because of the decisions that you have made as part of this McGuinty-Wynne alliance. It is destroying Ontario.

Back to the bill. For somebody who has no problem spending \$126 billion, you'd think you could come up with something to back your fancy schmancy little bill here with a few bucks. But no, not a nickel, not even a penny. They've got money. Hey, maybe Monique Smith would do that job in Washington gratis. Yeah, maybe she'd do that as public service, that job in Washington, not take the \$250,000, where she's gonna be livin' high off the hog, a sweet little appointment.

Take care of Kathleen Wynne; she'll take care of you. That's called quid pro quo, making a job in Washington that we don't need. It's sort of like those windmills that you guys want to keep building. You're paying people now to not produce power for power that we don't need and never will need and can't afford, but you're leaving that as the legacy for the people of Ontario. Shame on you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thanks very much. Questions and comments?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Wow. Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I'm always pleased to follow the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke and his dynamic performances in this House. He really did make some good points; I have to give him that. It's not very often that I can agree with a Conservative in this House, but we would not be debating this bill—because we've already debated it—if the members opposite had not prorogued this government last year.

We are wasting time in this House bringing forward bills that we have already debated for hours and hours. We have several issues in front of this House that could be coming back here with importance, like jobs. How are we getting our people in this province to work? This is a great small initiative, but what are families going to do when they have to take an unpaid leave to take care of their loved ones? Most families in this province are living from paycheck to paycheck, and here we are, saying, "Here you go. We'll keep your job safe," which is a good thing, and I'm sure they'd appreciate it, but how are they going to make sure that they have travel costs to get to and from where they need to be, especially with our folks in northern parts of the province that don't have the hospital facilities and the clinics that they need close to them?

There's a lot more that could go into this bill. It would be great to see the cousins of the members here bring forward EI that could be established with this to make it sustainable for families so that they really can wholeheartedly care for their loved ones without having to

worry about where they're going to get that money to pay the mortgage that month, to pay all of their outstanding debts that will still continue during that time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I always enjoy listening to my fellow colleague from eastern Ontario. He obviously had a bad day yesterday at the International Plowing Match for the attitude that he's showing here today.

What we have here is a filibuster in every respect. Let me give you some facts, Speaker. Five bills have gone over six and a half hours, as suggested by standing order 47 that the average bill should have: air ambulance, 19 hours; non-profit housing co-ops, almost 16 hours; Local Food Act, 20.5 hours; Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act, almost 19 hours; the budget, 25.5 hours. What does it mean? The Tories are filibustering and do not want to let the business of Ontario take place in this Legislature.

Now, if they stop filibustering and pass this bill that they're going to support—let me just give you the number of bills that are currently on the order paper that could be discussed, very important bills: one dealing with the Great Lakes act; highway traffic statute law; the Security for Courts, Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act; the Wireless Services Agreement Act, the cellphones—everybody's concerned about that; the Protection of Public Participation Act, the anti-SLAPP legislation that everybody is in favour of, that I've heard about; the Companies Statute Law Amendment Act; the Waste Reduction Act, so that we can increase the amount of recycling that we do in this province. All of this could be accomplished if the Conservative Party stops filibustering.

Stop filibustering those bills that you agree with. Let's get on with the business that the people of Ontario want us to get on with, and do not filibuster and have this Legislature come to a complete standstill.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** You know what you're doing, and it's wrong.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It's always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the Ontario PC caucus in this chamber, and also to follow my seatmate and very good friend, the MPP for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

I appreciate the comments by my colleagues from the third party. I do take exception, however, with the characterizations by the Attorney General. We both come from eastern Ontario and I expect that he would actually come to this assembly and he would communicate—

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I'm deeply hurt.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Well, I'm deeply hurt as well, Minister, because here is the situation: The government may want to talk about filibustering and delays but it wasn't the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party that prorogued this assembly for five months, that basically put a padlock on those doors so we couldn't do our work,

and when challenged, we find private emails from the Ontario Liberal Party that say the priority for the government of the time was to shut us down so we could stop looking at the power plants, in which they've lost \$1 billion, and in which they suggested that it was more important for them to have a leadership than it was to actually govern this province.

If we want to talk about passing legislation and if we want to talk about making this province better for the people who live there, then I would humbly suggest to the members opposite that they would have challenged their Premier at the time, and their current Premier, and have said that we must sit in this assembly, but they chose not to.

Many pieces of legislation died on the order paper. Many pieces of legislation were delayed, they had to be reintroduced, and at the time we were unable, as members of the opposition, to probe this government. So simply put, my seatmate, the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, has simply brought up all of those challenges that we have faced and he has put them into context as a result of what this bill does not do.

We will support this bill but I assure you, Speaker, this is something that could have been done much more quickly had this government stopped obstructing the ability for members of the opposition to do their job.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I'm very pleased to speak after my dear friend from Pembroke. I really enjoyed his performance yesterday; I know he had a bad day yesterday. He fell down the wagon at the plowing match, so that's why he's very agitated today.

0920

But still, I think that it's about time that we vote on this bill because there are very good bills that are waiting to be debated. As the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services—and the Ombudsman is very public about it. He wants us to pass Bill 51, the Security for Courts, Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act. I know that my friend was a great contributor to the amendments to this bill, and I thank him for that. He's very supportive of it. I'd like us to go on with this bill because we have also Bill 6, the Great Lakes act, that we need to debate in this House and that we need to pass. We have the good bill, Bill 60, the Wireless Services Agreements Act. It's important that we vote on that one, because right now our constituents are paying because of this action that is going on in the House. They would like us to debate that bill and pass that bill. We also have the Protection of Public Participation Act, Bill 83, a bill from the AG.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** It's a great bill.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** It's a great bill, and we would like this to be debated in the House—a short debate and pass this bill.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke has two minutes.



**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I appreciate the comments of my colleague from Hamilton Mountain, the Attorney General, the member for Nepean–Carleton and the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

I thank the member from Hamilton Mountain for her kind words. We don't agree on everything, but we agree on some portions of what we've talked about in this bill.

I actually had a really good day yesterday at the plowing match, but I do want to say to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services and the Attorney General that the air ambulance bill—19 hours. I know you think that's a lot of time. Is that enough time to talk about the billion dollars you people have wasted on the Ornge scandal? Is that too much time to talk about what you have cost the people of this province and the lives that have been lost by mistakes of the Ornge ambulance operation and the lives that have been put in jeopardy? I know one in my riding that was directly related to the failures of Ornge, and you want to talk less about it? I can see why.

As for the Minister of Correctional Services talking about Bill 60, the wireless bill, and how people are unhappy with cell phone costs, I'll tell you what our people are unhappy with as well: hydro costs. What are you doing about it? Have you got a bill to do something about hydro costs? No. Do you know what you're doing? You're going to build 5,000 more megawatts of wind. We don't have a market for the wind they're producing now. We're going to pay them to not produce it—pay them for producing nothing—but you want to keep building more.

Speaker, if doing something is a losing proposition, most people figure out that they should stop doing that, but this government? No. They're locked into their philosophy; they're locked into their ideology, and it's the people of the province of Ontario who are paying and paying and will continue to pay until they figure it out.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Rob Leone:** I'm pleased to rise in this House to talk about Bill 21, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 in respect of family caregiver, critically ill child care and crime-related child death or disappearance leaves of absence. It's an interesting bill title, Mr. Speaker.

But before I begin, I want to suggest that I was also at the International Plowing Match yesterday. It seemed that the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke had a great time. Certainly I had a great time with the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. When Liberal caucus members talk about their time, being protested by the folks who don't like the wind turbines that they're putting in and erecting—dividing communities—following their float all along, I would suggest that it's probably my colleagues across the aisle who didn't have quite a good time at the International Plowing Match, Mr. Speaker.

I'm always amazed when Liberal members come up and talk about this concept of a filibuster, and then they

use not only their allotted time to respond to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, but go over that time. They had four minutes, and then extended that. If you think that we should move on with bills, maybe you should avoid talking to them. But that is obviously your prerogative, and I feel very proud that members of our caucus do want to debate bills, and we represent our constituents when we do that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to preface my comments today based on a personal experience that I had earlier in April. As some members of this Legislature know, my wife and I, in April, gave birth to our third child. It was obviously a joyous occasion, but shortly after the birth of our child, my wife actually got really, really sick in the post-labour days. In fact, we got home on Saturday, and she was readmitted to hospital the Monday following, and spent five days in intensive care with a very serious and life-threatening medical condition. She had a blood infection that was very, very serious.

I preface my remarks today with that little story because obviously I think a lot of people might have noticed my absence, particularly on my side of the aisle, and might have thought that I was taking a babymoon of sorts and taking some time to spend with my child. I actually was, because my child didn't have any other parent to look after him other than myself. So we did spend some time at the hospital. Obviously, I took care of the newborn while my wife was recovering, and she spent some time thereafter trying to take care of herself. After she was released from the hospital, she spent many weeks recovering from her condition, and it was a very serious time.

I remember talking at length with my whip, the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. Sometimes he likes to show that he has an iron fist and rules with an iron fist, but we actually call him, on this side of the aisle, the miracle whip, because he can pull off some fantastic things and ensure that work gets done in this Legislature.

I actually remember coming to the Legislature one day. We both didn't have a chance to communicate, and on his trip home to Barry's Bay and my trip back to Cambridge, we both spent some time talking about the situation that my wife was in. Obviously, he didn't know the extent of what was going on at home. I remember talking about it, because he actually related to the scenario that my wife was going through because his daughter had meningitis, I believe, and we were talking about the links there.

I say that because when I remember that episode in my family's life, I remember the care and compassion that the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke showed to myself and to my wife. Also, the Leader of the Opposition himself and Deb were very helpful and they actually provided us with a couple of meals to take home. I thank the Leader of the Opposition and Deb Hutton for that because it's that care and compassion that I experienced.

So when I wanted to rise in this Legislature today to talk about this bill, I wanted to reference that, because I think people in those situations and those scenarios have to, obviously, understand what people go through in those moments—a very emotional time, a time where you don't know what's going to happen the next day. Those are very serious moments.

I think that any person, in the scenario or condition that I was in, going to their employer and saying, "Hey, I need to take a little bit of time off because I'm dealing with something very serious at home"—I think most compassionate employers in the province of Ontario would obviously grant that wish. I'd be very hopeful that the kindness and generosity of our province and the people of our province would show that kindness and that generosity to their workers.

So when I think about that episode and about how this team, my PC colleagues, rallied around myself at that time of critical need, I'm very proud to be part of this team, for sure, and blessed. They rallied, and I think that most Ontarians, when faced with one of their colleagues in a very serious moment in their life, would do the same thing.

0930

I wonder, after considering that, what the net effect of this legislation would actually be. Given that I do believe that most employers and most people in the province of Ontario are very compassionate and that they would obviously do anything they can to help out one of their friends, one of their colleagues out, the question is, do we actually need legislation like this, to essentially provide up to eight weeks of unpaid leave for people? Wouldn't that almost be automatic? I want to preface my remarks by saying that. What would be the net effect of this bill once this legislation passes? Are we going to see a groundswell of people taking advantage of something that common sense would dictate already exists? I think we have to understand that. We spend a lot of time debating the bills, because what is the repercussion that we're going to see? What are the consequences, what are the externalities that we have to think about when we're debating these pieces of legislation?

I obviously have a lot of faith in the people of Ontario, a lot of faith in our employers, and I have a lot of faith in people whose colleagues might be facing a very serious and potentially traumatic period in their lives. So I wonder what the net effect of this bill is going to be on people's lives. I have a suspicion that the net effect probably won't be as great as the bill intends. This is a feel-good bill. Does it have any teeth to it? The answer is probably no.

When we first debated this bill many, many months ago, the question was this: They can take the time off, but are they going to get paid? And if you're not going to get paid, are you going to take the time off? It's certainly one of those questions and considerations that would come forth, and I can just see the lineup of constituents once this bill passes, saying, "Well, we're entitled to this eight weeks but I have a hydro bill at home that I have to pay. I

have—obviously, perhaps—to get myself to the hospital or to the place where my loved one has fallen ill. How am I going to pay for that? How am I going to sustain myself?"

These are obviously very critical questions that this bill does not address. I think, in people's time of need, they're not really thinking about, "Well, I need to pay a bill." They want to obviously support and be supportive of their loved ones, but these are questions that I'm sure will come after the experience, after the moment passes and they realize that after eight weeks of taking care of a loved one, they can't pay their bills. I think that's just going to cause a lot of angst amongst people. They're going to say that they have this leave that they can take, but without the strings that will enable them to take that leave, I think a lot of people will be left disappointed, thinking that we've passed this feel-good legislation without the necessary tools, without the mechanism by which we can actually achieve the results this bill attempts to do.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I believe that certainly the bill has merit. It's a feel-good piece of legislation but I don't know if the net effect is going to be positive or negative.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** All my best to your family, to the member from Cambridge. I hope that your wife is doing well and that your children are happy and healthy and that your life has somewhat been able to get back to some normal ground. All the best to you.

You raised some things that caught my ear about employers and their compassion. Yes, if it was a perfect world, employers would say, "It's okay, go and deal with your family." But unfortunately, we don't live in a perfect world. I worked in a sector in hospitality where it was more than often that I had the boss who, first of all, wouldn't have told me my rights under the Employment Standards Act, which this would amend, and they wouldn't have saved my job for me. So this little piece is important when it comes to that.

I also have to say, what would I do without a paycheque at the same time? That's where we need to make sure we're lobbying the federal government on this piece of legislation to try to get EI attached to it so that families can take care of their family clear-headedly, knowing that at least they don't have to worry for their bills, that at least they will be able to pay the hydro bill, hopefully. Something has to be attached to it, because I'm quite sure that when you were taking care of your family, the last thing you wanted to worry about was, "Am I going to be able to pay my bills?"

We all know that you're probably—most likely—in a position that you wouldn't have to worry about that, but there are so many families out there that do have to worry about that. They're living paycheque to paycheque, and they don't know how they're going to pay that bill.

I hope we can get this off to committee, put some more teeth in it and make sure that it really does help the people of this province.



**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I want to commend the member from Cambridge for some very thoughtful comments this morning, articulated really well.

I just want to share a real-life example, and I talked about it last week. A teaching colleague of my wife's in Peterborough, at St. Patrick school, had a sister in Grafton, Ontario, suffering from bone cancer. She wanted to come to Peterborough to access PRHC, because of the radiation bunker, which provides some alleviation of the severe pain that one has with bone cancer.

The family, including the colleague of my wife, took some time off. The sister was moved to her home in Peterborough, because the extended family was in Lakefield, Ontario, close by to Peterborough. They had made the decision to have all the family together at this individual's home in Peterborough. This person passed away a day ago. She was also a teacher at the Catholic school in Grafton.

It was the opportunity to take some time off, to have the family all there together in the home in Peterborough, and all the members were able to come together. They had set up a schedule where the sister would not be left alone, on a 24/7 basis; they were there every day to be with her.

Obviously, when this bill reaches committee, we can have a discussion about time off, the eight weeks. I know that for this particular family, having that opportunity to be with a wife, an aunt, a cousin—it was very precious time, as the end was near.

If this bill gives that opportunity for families right across the province of Ontario, I think that can be looked at as a very good piece of legislation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** It's a pleasure to rise, out of respect for the comments made by the member from Cambridge. Dr. Leone and his family have just recently had a little child. He explained in his remarks how these things affect each of our lives and, in fact, the lives of our constituents.

I think the health care system is a good place to start on this, because often these needs of individual families—last week, I had people with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis here to speak to the Minister of Health. These are people who are slowly being suffocated because of the lack of proper medication for a chronic ailment they have. There is a medication that would help to improve that situation. I think of my constituents and the people who were here last week. They can't get access to these drugs under EAP, the Exceptional Access Program for medications. The minister is basically just not listening. In fact, if nothing else, it would give them hope.

When you look at individual cases and why they may need time off, or family caregivers need to have a break or something—I think this bill needs to go to committee. As we have said before, we support it. Mr. Leone said as well that it is generally a feel-good bill.

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The government itself, under the Employment Standards Act, is saying you can have this number of days off. So really, it's downloading onto the employer, the small mom-and-pop business that needs that person to pack the groceries or to mix the paint or whatever it is in the little store they're operating. They can't mix the paint or pack or prepare the meat; the butcher is off sick or something. Do you understand? They have to replace that person. I suspect that's really the problem here: There's no mechanism for the small business—the larger businesses usually have enough flexibility. I managed an area in a plant and I understand the deal.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

The member from Cambridge has two minutes.

**Mr. Rob Leone:** I'd like to thank, first of all, the member from Hamilton Mountain, the Minister of Rural Affairs and the member for Durham for their comments. Yes, to the member from Hamilton Mountain, everything is fine and dandy at home now and everyone is healthy, thankfully, after that period of time. I should have mentioned that, I think, in my remarks. Things are going well.

The Minister of Rural Affairs: First of all, my condolences on the loss of your constituent yesterday. Those are the kinds of stories that we hear from time to time that at least show that this bill has some merit, that we can help some people by this. Again, I'm concerned by the fact that once we broadcast that this actually exists, people are going to wonder what the mechanisms are going to be, but I guess that's what we have committees for. We have committees for discussing these issues and moving forward.

Certainly, I would hope that members of this Legislature do take the time to consider all the ins and outs of this bill. I think the member from Durham, in raising the point about smaller businesses being perhaps affected differently by this legislation—that is a consideration that certainly merits some further attention. But at the end of the day I still have faith in the good-heartedness of Ontarians who want to be helpful in times of need. I do suspect that there are going to be, obviously, a few bad apples, but let's hope that we can aspire to better and to celebrate what I believe is the greatest province in this country because of the good things that we do and the good-naturedness and kindness of our hearts.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the time to speak to Bill 21. I will listen intently to other speakers to this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** It gives me great pleasure and it is a privilege to speak to Bill 21, Employment Standards Amendment Act (Leaves to Help Families), 2013. This act is an act of compassion for families that are suffering with the great misfortune of having a sick child or a sick family member. Often these diseases go on at great length and are extremely draining on families just from

the point of view of the sick family member, and if they have to work they don't have the time to stay at home and be with their family member. So although this bill seems to do just a little bit—it doesn't offer money, but it offers time to families to spend with their sick family member or to grieve over their child who has died, whether it's from illness or disappearance or a crime.

So we support this bill, as the PC Party. Compassion is something that is non-partisan, as we heard the Premier speak about last week. We embrace her offer to support non-partisan bills because this is non-partisan. It's about helping people, about showing compassion as government, as neighbours, as family, to those who are having trouble at home. Losing a family member, having a family member who is ill, is always a terrible experience.

I'd like to tell you a few stories. I suspect every member here has people come into their office looking for help because they're desperate. They are very sad stories, they're heart-breaking stories, and they're the thing that drive a lot of us to carry on day to day, doing what we do. Being a politician can be a frustrating life, because we're unfortunately not able to change the world overnight, like I thought we could do when I first came here. I've discovered it's different, it's very different.

#### *Interjection.*

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** Yes, I need more than one night. However, not to make light of this bill—this is a very important bill. Compassion for our neighbours, for families who are having trouble, is something that we must do. I would say that as a caring society we have a moral obligation to help people who are in trouble. Certainly we will vote for this and we will support this, because this is non-partisan and we support the Premier entirely. She's not very good at plowing, but this is a good idea on her part.

I'd like to tell you a few stories of people who came into my office that demonstrated very clearly to me troubles that families are having.

Paul Joinette is a constituent of mine from Stittsville. He's a small business man, and I was in to see him because he called about a problem he was having with the city of Ottawa asking for permits for his small business or for this or for that; they seemed to be quite unreasonable, so I went over to see him to try to offer help on that issue. As I was sitting in his office, I looked up at the wall, and there was a poster of this beautiful young woman—about a three-foot-square poster, a picture of her dressed in casual clothes, very recreational clothes, and with a beautiful smile. I said to Paul, "Who's that, Paul, in the picture on your wall?" He said, "That's Emily. Emily is my daughter and she died." Emily had cystic fibrosis. She had died two years previously of this terrible disease. I must admit I wasn't familiar with it because I'd never known a family first-hand that had a child who had cystic fibrosis. I am aware now because the story that Paul told me was the saddest story that I ever heard.

He went on to say that Emily was the apple of his eye, the joy of his life. When she was young, it became

apparent that she had cystic fibrosis. It's one of those terrible diseases that, when you hear that news, it's like a 20-year death sentence, because it affects the lungs; their lungs will fail. They will die because they cannot breathe because of scarring on the lungs and impairment of the lungs. It gets worse with age. Usually by the age of their early 20s, these people die a slow, long, miserable death, and families have to watch this and deal with this. It's hard to imagine, as a father or a mother, experiencing that.

So Paul told us about the many trips to hospitals, in and out of emergencies, and how the mucus in her lungs would impede her breathing, plug her breathing tubes, and they would have to massage her back and help her to try and get this mucus out of her lungs. It would be very thick and pasty—to use his words, like peanut butter. So you can imagine trying to breathe with that kind of material in your lungs and in your throat. He had to live with that, and every day he and his wife had to help his daughter and massage her and get through that battle on a daily basis.

The objective was to try and get a lung transplant. After a lengthy period of time, they found matching lungs, and she had a lung transplant. Unfortunately, the lungs and her body weren't compatible and it didn't work, so that was a failure. As I recall, I think they even had a second chance at a lung transplant, and that didn't work either. In the end, poor Emily died in the hospital, holding her father's hand. I must admit it was the saddest story I ever heard a father tell. Any of us who have children could relate to that.

So we need to provide time for people like Paul and his wife to try to cope with that. It actually was a stress over the years that the family couldn't stand. He and his wife are no longer together, which is another tragedy. Something like this bill would be a little bit that would help somewhat. So that's one of the reasons we support the bill.

Another fellow who came into my office was Jim Bryce, who has idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, which my colleague from Durham was speaking about a few minutes ago. He's not a child; he's an older man. He's 73. He's very brave and very proud. He said, "I'm not complaining. I've had a good life." He was very articulate, very well spoken. He said, "I have idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, and I have about three years to live. I'm going to die, but I've had a good life."

There is a drug available from a company called InterMune that would give him more time and give all these people more time. It's approved in Canada, but it's not approved by the government. So it's really unfortunate that Jim Bryce's family is not going to have that extra time available to him that this drug would provide. I think that's a travesty.

Another family in my riding went through a terrible time. They had two sons—Bill and Laurie Ayliffe, from the community of MacLaren's Landing, which is where I live, Mr. Speaker. You'll have to come and see us some-



time. It's a beautiful place. The Ayliffes enjoy it tremendously.

They had a son who was about 20 and he couldn't cope with depression and took his own life about 10 years ago. That had been going on for years and years and years, a terrible thing to live through, always afraid that the poor boy isn't going to be able to cope and someday will end his life, which he did.

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They had a second son, and a year ago, unfortunately, in an industrial accident on a construction site, he made a mistake. He got electrocuted and he died.

So here is a family that had two sons and now they are both gone. If anybody needs compassion, it's that family. They are destroyed. They're just the saddest people you would ever want to see; their family is gone and it's hard for them to come up with the spirit to live on and carry on.

Another group of people that comes into my office that is heartbreaking and probably the one that we should and could do the most for is families that have children with autism. The stories they tell are heart-wrenching, heartbreaking, and we as a society and as a government don't do enough. Again, as a caring society, I believe we have a moral obligation to help those who can't help themselves, and certainly families with autism fall into that category. We look after people who have heart troubles, cancer troubles, broken legs, all these more common ailments; they get full treatment, full financing. But if you have autism, mental illness—and seniors often are without the help they need.

Marta Chénier and her husband, Tim McGinn, have a son, Logan. They get no financing from the government. He has to, by law, go to school. They're called every day to come and pick the boy up because he disrupts the class, so he basically shouldn't be there. Twice, when they went to pick him up, the police had the boy handcuffed in class. Now, that would do him a heck of a lot of good to rehabilitate him and fit back into society. There are private clinics that would help him with IBI treatment. They know that; they don't have the money. This family has gone bankrupt twice. Their boy is 12 years old. He's sort of in that grey area of too old or not too old. We're trying to help from our office but it is very difficult, and we need to do better in this province to help families that have autism.

All of these stories are about compassion for families that are suffering with death or illness and we don't do a good enough job. My point here is that this is a good bill. We support this bill, but compassion is something that we all need to be extending more and more. We need to set our priorities as a government and be looking after people, especially people who have health troubles like this, and stop looking after things like green energy acts, endangered species acts, and things that don't look after people.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** This debate that's been going on here today is a reflection of the debate that we had last year. The stories that we are hearing are no different; they're different people, but they're not different stories from what we heard last year. This bill does a very little bit to help folks.

There is another program out there called the family medical leave that does have EI attached to it. That is something where, when they have a family member who is about to die within 26 weeks, they can tap into those EI services and make sure that their finances are taken care of while they are taking care of their family members.

But we really need to be looking at how we are taking care of families with autism. How is a family supposed to say, "Well, I have up to eight weeks to take care of my family issue that's happening here that is completely beyond my control. I have absolutely no power. I have no money now to be able to do this, and I'm just expected to keep going"? Families are struggling. We need to make sure that we're putting real things in place that are really going to affect families, that are really going to help families get through struggling situations.

There's so much that can actually go into this bill. I really hope that we can move it out of here. It would be great to see it done debate and move on. Get it to committee. Let's get these important pieces that we know need to happen—the changes to this legislation in committee—so we can move it forward and make it real for the people of this province.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Fraser:** It's a pleasure today to get up to speak about Bill 21. I've only been here—this is my second week. I think it's my sixth day.

It's evident to me that it's something that we all agree on. It's something we're doing for families. I think that's what I heard from all the members this morning. I think that when people send us here, they send us to get things done. It seems to be one of those things that we can get done. I would encourage all the members to support getting this thing moving forward.

When you're in a family situation where someone is ill, dying or in a very serious health crisis, we have to provide—I agree—tools for those families to support them. This is one of those tools. There are many other tools that we need to provide, but we need to do that as a community, and communities have to do that. So I think sending a signal that this is important—it's an important thing for people to consider, not only as business people or employers, but as family members and friends and members of community associations. I think it's an important signal and I think we should get this thing done.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I rise with sadness and grief. My constituents today in Nepean–Carleton have witnessed a very tragic accident where a Via Rail car hit an OC Transpo double-decker bus. At the moment, we are

aware that there have been five fatalities. I know I speak on behalf of everybody here to give love, support and grief to my constituents, those who have lost loved ones.

My community is the largest riding in the city of Ottawa. It's one of the fastest-growing in Canada, as well. Many people on that bus are commuters to downtown Ottawa. Many of them are probably federal civil servants and students who commute from our bedroom community into the downtown.

I want to let my constituents know that I've already spoken with our neighbouring MPP, Madeleine Meilleur, who's the community safety minister, who has assured me that the government of Ontario will do what it takes to support them. I've spoken to our municipal councillor, Jan Harder, who has assured me that the city of Ottawa will do what it takes, and hotlines are being set up at the moment. I have spoken with our federal member of Parliament, Pierre Poilievre, who is a cabinet minister. He has assured me that we will continue to keep the community updated.

Speaker, I'm sure you will understand that I will take leave from this place today to be with my community. I want to thank all of my colleagues who are going to be with us in prayer, and I want to thank all of those leaders in our community who work for OC Transpo and for other city services and our police and our fire for being there for response.

Thank you for indulging me, and I want to thank my colleagues for this opportunity to rise on this solemn occasion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Sorry to hear that.

Questions and comments?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Being an MPP from Ottawa, my heart goes to the families and friends of those who already have received, or will receive, the bad news that someone—one of their loved ones, their friends—will have been a fatality, they will have died, in this unfortunate accident, or some others will be injured. I wanted to let them know that we will be working with the city of Ottawa and OC Transpo to give them the assistance that they need.

My love and prayers are with them. It is unfortunate, and we are all heartbroken hearing about this unfortunate incident.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Carleton–Mississippi Mills has two minutes.

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** Mr. Speaker, it would seem that compassion has been called on this morning for the families in Ottawa who have suffered losses with this terrible accident. I just heard of it now from our member from Nepean–Carleton.

I, too, am from the Ottawa area. Perhaps people I know or constituents would be involved in the accident. Those of us from Ottawa, and indeed across the province, will need to spend some time thinking of this and responding to the situation and calling to see if there's anything we can do.

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With respect to the bill at hand, we support this bill, as I mentioned earlier. Mr. Speaker, I think we've heard many voices—the member from Hamilton Mountain, the member from Ottawa South, from Nepean–Carleton and Ottawa–Vanier—expressing in very vivid fashion and in some detail the need for compassion for families, which has just become much more vivid and immediate with the Ottawa disaster.

At this point, I think I will end my comments on that note, Mr. Speaker, because there's no need to say any more. We all know that we have a terrible day in Ontario on our hands because of this disaster in Ottawa.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** While I obviously am rising to speak to Bill 21, the Employment Standards Amendment Act, I certainly have to offer my comments as well to the member from Nepean–Carleton and the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, and all members in this House, whether their riding is close to Ottawa or farther away, such as mine in Nipissing. This is obviously a terrible tragedy, and our hearts go out to the families and to the emergency services providers who are called yet again to duty. We thank them for their service, Speaker, and our prayers are with the families who have lost loved ones today. Their suffering is only going to begin with the news this morning.

It seems so trivial, Speaker, to speak to one of our bills here in the House after such a tragedy, but, as the families will heal and they'll learn time will heal these—I think I'm going to mention something that the member from Carleton–Mississippi Mills said. This bill, Bill 21, Employment Standards Amendment Act, is not about money; it is about time. It's about giving time to families who have a particular need. Like the members have also said, we believe this is a good bill and we will support this bill. The member from Hamilton Mountain also said, "Look, another year has gone by. The names and the examples have changed but the stories are the same"—another year, nothing done; new names, new stories, new examples, but the thrust of it is still the same. Nothing has been changed.

Speaker, we are glad that the Liberals actually listened to our concerns last session and have made significant changes and improvements to the bill. The legislation actually eliminates inconsistencies between the federal labour code and our provincial laws, instead of creating them. This legislation was originally introduced as Bill 30, the Family Caregiver Leave Act, in the last session. It originally only contained provisions to introduce the family caregiver leave, but it had no proper consultation with stakeholders.

I think I'm going to take a couple of moments to talk about that theme that we've seen from the government: the lack of proper consultation with stakeholders, not only in Bill 21. As I mentioned earlier, I'm the member from Nipissing; I live in North Bay. I can tell you that we've had about three stunning events in North Bay in



the last year or two that have resulted in a lack of stakeholder consultation. Back on March 23 of a year ago, we heard of the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission being put up in a fire sale—absolutely no consultation with the north. It came as a complete surprise. In fact, only a short while earlier, the former Premier signed a pledge never to do that, and we saw that happen—again, no consultation with the stakeholders.

We found this past year that 10 parks in Ontario were closed; nine of them happened to be in northern Ontario. If I were in a political mood today, I would say none of them are in Liberal ridings. I'm not in a political mood this morning; I'm just sticking to the stories—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** It slipped out.

Those parks, again, were closed without consultation. We saw Lake Nipissing fishing being derailed this year by the limits, from four down to two pickerel—no consultation, once again. It seems to be a theme. I can tell you that—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I'm sticking to my local area, just for a moment. I'll get to horse racing and the Green Energy Act in a bit. I will tie it into this bill, Speaker, I promise.

It's the theme that we've seen from the government: no consultation. But with a little bit of consultation, you can do some good.

This bill proposes several amendments to the Employment Standards Act to mimic the similar changes the federal government has made to the Canada Labour Code. I look forward to supporting this bill so that it can go to committee and we can begin to talk to stakeholders and find the things that are of need to Ontarians that this bill will satisfy.

Unfortunately, what we didn't see with my three examples, and I'll go back to those for a moment, Speaker—with Ontario Northland there was no consultation. The member from Parry Sound–Muskoka and I travelled 1,600 kilometres through the north. We met with stakeholders, and we found out, for instance, that because of this news about Ontario Northland, one major lumber company in northern Ontario cancelled a \$10-million expansion up around Kapuskasing, because they didn't know whether there would be a freight train the next year to get their goods out. This is the punishment that the north has seen because there was no consultation.

The continued theme of no consultation from this government put the 1,000 employees of Ontario Northland in flux. Today, a year and a half later, they are still in flux. They don't know whether to send their kids to college or university; they don't know whether to buy a car; they don't know whether to sell their house. It's a very big concern, this lack of consultation we've seen from this government.

We saw, for instance, the parks that they closed. We saw, when they did overreact afterwards to consult, that the municipalities took over some of these parks and began to develop solutions. That's what happens when

you talk to your stakeholders, and I am looking forward to supporting this bill so that it can get to committee. I am looking forward to those stakeholders being consulted. I know that good things will come when you talk to the people of Ontario. We saw that with the parks, as I said, where the municipalities have taken over a couple of the parks and guaranteed the financial outcome, and some of these parks have reopened under municipal tutelage. That's what happens when you talk to your stakeholders and your friends in Ontario—a little too late in Lake Nipissing. They formed a stakeholders' committee—they closed the barn door after the horse had already escaped. Sadly, it was a very bad season for the fishers in North Bay.

That's what happens when you don't consult, and that's what happened with this bill. Here we are a year later. There are good opportunities with the Employment Standards Amendment Act, the leave to help families. I am looking forward to supporting that. I am really looking forward to supporting that bill. I know that as of January 1, 2013, the federal government began providing grants lasting 35 weeks for the equivalent of the proposed crime-related child death or disappearance leave. This provincial legislation will incur no costs provincially, just protect the job from termination. I know that in June 2013, the federal government started paying benefits for the federal equivalent of the proposed critically ill child care leave. Speaker, this bill will catch us up. This bill is a good bill. Again, it's not about money; this bill is about giving the families time.

Speaker, I will close, again, by speaking to the message that we heard from our member from Nepean–Carleton and from the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. We saw a terrible tragedy here in Ontario this morning. I can only begin to imagine the horror that is felt in some families whose phone will be ringing this morning with some awfully tragic news, the kind of news that nobody here would ever want but that sadly in Ontario some are going to receive this morning. Again, from all of our members in Nipissing and members of the House, we offer our most sincere condolences.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you.

It's almost 10:15, and I'd like to, first of all, just thank the members for their concern about the tragic circumstances in Ottawa. It's at times like this that I'm really proud of the House—when they come together and put all political things aside and do the right thing. Thank you very much for your comments.

It being 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

*The House recessed from 1011 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I'm delighted that we are joined today by Tara McDonnell from London, Ontario.

She's a student at Humber and has been a wonderful contributor to my constituency office.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I'd like to welcome some members here today from Union Gas: Joe Martucci, Mike Packer, Rick Birmingham, Chuck Conlon, Heather Donaghey, Matthew Gibson, Mark Isherwood, Tim Kennedy, Paul Rietdyk and Mike Shannon, all from Union Gas in Toronto and Chatham-Kent.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure to welcome the grandmother of our page from Prince Edward-Hastings, Ian Chapelle. All the way from Sudbury, Gloria Lanthier is here from Sudbury. Welcome to the Legislature.

**Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield:** It's my pleasure to welcome representatives from both Enbridge Gas Distribution and Union Gas to Queen's Park today. I know they'll be visiting a number of members.

I also wanted to remind everyone that there's a reception this evening in the dining room from 5 to 7. I hope that everyone comes, considering that between the two of them, 3.2 million customers are served by these two good companies.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from—let me get this right—Windsor-Tecumseh.

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** Try again.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** London West.

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** It's my great pleasure today to welcome the proud parents of page Taylor Roch, Erinkate Roch and Ben Roch, who are here today from my riding of London West. Welcome.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I apologize to the member. At least I've got you sitting beside each other.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** It gives me great pleasure this morning to introduce to the Legislature some friends of mine, but also will be attending their reception afterwards. From Union Gas, it's Steve Baker, Lindsay Boyd, Chuck Dubeau, Dave Simpson, Paul Ungerman and Mark Emmanuel.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On behalf of the member from Mississauga-Brampton South, regarding page Aly Muhammad Mithani's mother, Nadia Mithani, and grandmother, Badra Mulk, we welcome you here in the House today.

#### TRANSIT ACCIDENT IN OTTAWA

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Just before we begin question period, I wanted to start by addressing—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On a point of order?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** It's a point of order. I apologize, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Premier, on a point of order.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Just before we begin question period, I wanted to start by addressing the tragedy in Ottawa with the Via train and the OC Transpo collision.

My heart, and I know the hearts of all of us, go out to the individuals and the families who are affected. I want to thank our first responders for being on the scene. The province will be in constant contact, to assist the city of Ottawa or the federal government.

I know there have already been fatalities confirmed, so I would ask that we have a moment of silence for those people.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Premier is asking for unanimous consent to have a moment of silence for the victims of the tragedy this morning in Ottawa. Agreed? Agreed.

Could I have all people please stand in the House.

*The House observed a moment's silence.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their courtesy and respect.

It is now time for question period.

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** First, I want to commend and thank the Premier for her opening comments about the tragedy and the loss of life in Ottawa with the collision today. I want to echo her comments that the hearts and prayers of Ontario PC members are with the families and with the emergency support workers who responded quickly to the scene. I know my colleague Lisa MacLeod has already raced back to her riding in moral support of the families impacted. I commend the Premier for her quick response and putting provincial assets to use. Thank you, Premier.

My question is to the Premier; it's very straightforward. Later this afternoon, we're debating a resolution in the name of my colleague from Etobicoke-Lakeshore, Doug Holyday, that is calling upon the province to keep its promise to the people of Scarborough to actually build a subway according to the city of Toronto council's wishes, which would go all the way to Sheppard.

Premier, are you going to keep your promise to the people of Scarborough and support the resolution today?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** As the Leader of the Opposition knows, we are moving ahead with building a subway for the people of Scarborough. We need to get going. There's \$1.4 billion, Mr. Speaker, that we have put on the table and an additional \$320 million for improvements to the Kennedy station. Well over \$1.4 billion is available. That is the money that is on the table.

As the Leader of the Opposition knows, if there is other money that we don't know about, if the federal government is willing to step up, then that is a different discussion. But we are going to build the subway in Scarborough: \$1.4 billion plus \$320 million. That's real money. That money is available, and we need to get moving.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?



**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Back to the Premier: Quite frankly, Premier, you're breaking a campaign promise. You were clear in the Scarborough campaign that you supported what the city had called for, which is a subway through Scarborough Town Centre to Sheppard. You were very clear about that. That was what the TTC had asked for; that's what was supported by Karen Stintz and by Andy Byford. Then you unleashed your transportation minister, to put it kindly, who has been very erratic on this file. He's attacked the mayor; he's attacked Councillor Stintz; he's attacked Andy Byford. He's attacked pretty well everybody under the sun because nobody supports his plan.

So I ask you, Premier: Clearly, the behaviour of your Minister of Transportation has been very erratic on this file. Don't you think that his decision to pull this plan out of his hat is erratic as well? Isn't there a better plan? And why don't you stick to what you originally said and build that subway through Scarborough Town Centre to Sheppard like you promised during the campaign? It's plain and simple.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Again, Mr. Speaker, I will just reiterate: We are committed to building the subway in Scarborough, which is what we said during the by-election, but quite frankly, we said long before that that we were committed to building transit across the GTHA, including in Scarborough, and that's what we will do.

The Leader of the Opposition knows full well that the plan that's being put forward by the city is a \$3-billion plan. There is no business plan to find the additional funds to build that plan. We are moving ahead with an affordable, funded plan that will get a subway in Scarborough, quite frankly in a corridor that, from my understanding from the Scarborough members, was always intended to be a subway. It was always intended to be a subway for decades, and so we are building a subway in that corridor.

I am pleased that the Leader of the Opposition is interested in transit. But in terms of erratic support for transit, I would say that has been what's been coming from the opposition.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplement-ary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Premier, what you're doing is you're building a white elephant, and you know it. Nobody has supported this boondoggle of a plan. You're basically taking \$1.4 billion, and let's be clear about what the stand-alone Murray-Wynne plan is all about: You're going to have fewer stops. You're going to condemn people to bus rides for years and years to come. You're going to end the subway at Warden station. Nobody supports this plan.

1040

It's about as hard to pin you down as it is Glen Murray, who changes his ideas every single day. First you were for LRTs; then you were going to build a subway like the city of Toronto wanted. Now you've flip-flopped yet again. I just want to make it very plain and simple. You promised something during the by-

election. It was the right thing to do. Why don't you actually keep your promise to go to Scarborough? You think they're from Scarberia. They should be full citizens in the city of Toronto. Do what you said. Do the right thing. Keep your promises and—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Order.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. I've said it enough.

*Premier?*

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I really think that kind of language does a disservice to people in this city. You know, I'm one of the people who fought tooth and nail to preserve the integrity of this city when that member was sitting in a government that was determined to undermine this city, that amalgamated the city against the will of the city, that filled in a hole on Eglinton Avenue, that did not build transit. So I'm sorry, but I do not accept the perspective of that member when it comes to building transit or support for the GTHA.

We are building a funded line. There is money on the table, and the plans that are coming forward from the member opposite and from the city, quite frankly, at this point, are not funded. There is \$1.4 billion that we are going to use to build a subway. If there is more money that the Leader of the Opposition knows about, then we should hear about that.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Back to the Premier: Well, Leslie Frost, John Robarts, Bill Davis and Mike Harris all built subways. They built subways underground, added stations. That's the reality. And I guess the Premier wasn't listening last week, but I'll do the score again.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. Order.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Attorney General, please come to order. Thunder Bay—Atikokan, come to order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm saying it with a straight face.

Please finish—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Eglinton—Lawrence, come to order.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Thank you, Speaker.

I'll remind my colleagues opposite of the score in the game. The number of subway stations opened under PC governments: 64; the number under the Liberals: absolutely zero. It's true.

Look, I know that the Liberals think that Scarborough is off on another planet somewhere. I know when the

going gets tough, your Scarborough MPPs scurry away like mice. They're afraid to take you on. Well, I'm—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Premier?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** If the yelling is stopping you from hearing me say "Question," that is their problem.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No, it wasn't. Trust me.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

There was a time in this province when Progressive Conservatives did build transit, Mr. Speaker. There was a time. That is not this time, and it has not been the time for the last 20 years. The fact is, here's what we are doing: We're investing \$416 million in the renewal of Toronto's streetcar fleet; we're investing \$600 million to build Ottawa's light rail transit; we're investing \$300 million in Waterloo region's rapid transit; we're investing \$870 million to extend the Yonge-University-Spadina line; 34 kilometres of dedicated lanes in York region for rapid-transit buses; and the list goes on. Some \$16.4 billion is at work right now building transit in the GTHA. That's—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Look, I know the members from Scarborough that you have in your caucus—when the going gets tough, they scurry away like mice. They're not going to stand up to you. I will stand in my place and I will fight for the people of Scarborough, I'll fight for the people of Toronto, and I will fight tooth and nail to make you actually keep your promise to build the Scarborough subway line like you said during the by-election campaign.

Look, you've made your promises. Andy Byford, from his experience with the London Underground, from his experience with Sydney transit—

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** How dare you insult Scarborough?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I will hold for a moment. In some cases I normally try to keep the clock organized, and other times I won't.

Thank you. Finish.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Well, thanks. I hear some heckling from the member for Scarborough. I wish he would actually raise his voice in cabinet and have them keep their promises, instead of raising it here. Where were you? Maybe he'll stand up at cabinet and he'll show some backbone and actually try to keep his promise, because you're not going to. Andy Byford, an expert, well-respected across the field, he says your plan isn't viable. Why do you think the mayor of Winnipeg knows more about transit in Toronto than Andy Byford, the TTC or the city council? What makes you the expert?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Peterborough will come to order.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The people who speak for Scarborough sit in this caucus. The people who speak for Scarborough and who have represented Scarborough and have advanced the cause for building a subway in Scarborough sit on this side of the House, and they have been consistent. They have been consistent for years. They have said we need a subway in Scarborough, and quite frankly, those have been the persuasive arguments that we have heard and that have moved us to this point. We are building that subway in Scarborough.

But here's the issue: We are going to invest in an economic strategy that includes investing in people, investing in infrastructure that communities need. That includes transit in the GTHA and transit across the region and across the province. It means investing in and supporting businesses that will help local economies to grow. That's what we're going to do, Mr. Speaker. Building transit is a fundamental part of that strategy.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I'm proud to address the weak-kneed Liberal Scarborough caucus here. If there's one thing they've been consistent in, it's their inconsistency. Last year they stood here and they voted against subways for Scarborough. Then they were the LRT champions, then during the by-election suddenly they were subway champions, and now they're showing the courage of field mice by scuttling away when they should be standing in their place and fighting for you to keep your promise. We'll see where they vote later today, Premier.

Well, let me tell you this. I know that you don't like me comparing you to Premier McGuinty, but I think it's very apt. He was known as somebody who would say one thing, and then he would flip-flop and break his promise later. At least Premier McGuinty would take about a year or so to do so; you broke your promise to the people of Scarborough within a matter of weeks. So please tell us you're not going to pull a McGuinty. Please tell us that you're different from Dalton. Please tell us you're going to keep your promise and vote for Doug Holyday's resolution in the House later today. Say it ain't so; stand up; keep your promises.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very proud of our government's record on investment in transit. From the day we came into office we made a commitment to building transit, and we've been doing that across the province.



I just want to say I really don't believe that personal attack is necessary. I don't believe that calling names and undermining people's credibility or attempting to do that is necessary. I think we can talk about the substance of this issue, and that is building transit and moving people around the region, without resorting to that. So I just want to say I'm not going to engage in that.

But what I am going to say, Mr. Speaker, is that I had the privilege of travelling in the 680News plane today. I saw the congestion around the region. This is not about one subway line; this is about building transit, which we are doing, and continuing to do the work that we've been doing for the last few years, investing in transit across the region and across the province. It will help people in their day-to-day lives, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** New question, the leader of the third party.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** If this tone continues, there will be people not out of a job but out of the House.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No, not really. It's my desire for it to rise, not lower.

Leader of the third party, please.

#### MEMBERS' PRIVILEGES

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I want to begin by sharing the condolences and the thoughts and prayers, on behalf of New Democrats, for the families, the victims, the staff and all of the people involved in the tragedy that occurred in Ottawa this morning. We are hopeful that the community will overcome this tragedy in a way that gets them through it. It's quite a serious matter.

1050

Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Will the Premier agree to unanimous consent so that we can open up the scope of the gas plants committee?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I believe that there is a discussion going on among the House leaders right now. I'll let the government House leader respond in the supplementary.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The Premier refused to answer this question last week and she said, "Opening up the scope of the committee is a discussion that needs to happen amongst the House leaders," which she just repeated again. Well, that discussion amongst the House leaders has happened, but answers haven't happened.

Will the Premier agree to open up the scope of the gas plant committee so we can ask about attempts by Liberal insiders to influence the Speaker, or will she keep protecting people like the Liberal campaign director and senior Liberal staffers?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I'm a bit disappointed. I think the tradition of this House is that negotiations between House leaders happen at House leaders' meetings, but if the member of the third party wishes to get into it, she is absolutely wrong in standing here today and saying that no answers have been given. In fact, answers were given, Mr. Speaker, through your ruling.

Let's review the facts. I think all members of the Legislature were concerned about the email exchange that came out this summer. We were concerned about the committee's ruling and we looked at potential ways forward around the scope of the committee or, as the honourable House leader of the PC party decided, to go ahead with a point of privilege. That point of privilege was very clear on a number of points: first of all, that you were not intimidated and, second of all, that no attempt was made, Mr. Speaker, to intimidate you.

So when we're taking a look now at the question around the scope of the committee, I think we have to look—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please.

I've tried to be as delicate and understanding as possible when it comes to questions in the House. In this particular instance, it has come up again, albeit from an original, general idea. What you see happening now is that you're getting responses and questions geared to a decision that has already been made in this House, and I'm asking that it be avoided. It is not good for us, not here in this House today, but in the overall tenor of the place and the overall history of what could go on in the future. So I'm asking members to be very sensitive to asking questions about a ruling that's already been made to prevent the discussion that's happening.

I'm going to continue, and I would ask the leader of the third party to ask her final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Last week, the Premier passed the buck for opening the scope of the gas plants committee to her House leader, so we did our job and we took the issue to her House leader. We asked for unanimous consent to expand the scope of the committee—exactly what she told us to do—but we haven't gotten an answer. The Premier likes to talk about openness, but when it comes time to do the right thing and open up the scope of the gas plant committee she's as secretive as her predecessor was.

Will the Premier keep her promise, keep her word and back up our motion at the committee to do its job?

**Hon. John Milloy:** We have weekly House leader meetings. We had one last week. Those discussions are usually kept confidential, but the leader of the third party wants to get into it. We had a discussion and we said we would continue that discussion. But the simple matter is, Mr. Speaker—and I'm aware of what you've said—that your wording was very clear of what happened in that meeting. What the New Democratic Party seems to be asking is that we hold hearings into an incident that never happened. I wonder why the—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please.

I thought I was pretty clear. Here's the problem: You can re-ask a question or give a different answer to accomplish the same thing, as long as you stay away from the ruling. I'm asking you to avoid the discussion of the ruling.

Finish, please.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I think we have grave concerns that the motion that has been put forward by the New Democratic Party would do nothing to advance the work of the committee. Mr. Speaker, I am not going to reference the specifics of your ruling, especially in light of your ruling, and I trust that that is in order.

## GOVERNMENT'S AGENDA

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also for the Premier. People actually want to trust their government, and they want it to keep its promises. They hear the Premier talk about fairness. Instead, this is what they see: They see her considering new taxes and tolls of up to \$1,000 per family, while at the same time she's moving ahead with a tax loophole that will let corporations write off the HST on meals and expenses. Does the Premier think that's fair?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't accept the premise of the question. Here's the reality: We are committed to, and I've just had a series of exchanges with the Leader of the Opposition about our commitment to, building transit. The leader of the third party, I would have thought, would have been supportive of building transit in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area and building transit beyond.

The fact is that the reference she's making to what she's calling a loophole is not, in fact, a loophole. The Minister of Finance has been in touch with the federal Minister of Finance, and that is a separate issue, because the reality is we need transit in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area.

Successful governments have not built transit. We have been building transit, and we need to continue to do that if we're going to be competitive into the future. Our commitment stands. We are going to continue building the infrastructure that we need to keep our economy cooking and to get it going.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** People have watched as this government has played game after game after game with their public transit. The Minister of Transportation promised the people of Scarborough a subway, but, instead of a real plan, what they've got now is a hot mess, and people are more and more concerned that they're going to be stuck with the bill.

Does the Premier think it's fair to ask people to pay more—this is the premise of the question. Does the Premier think it's fair to ask people to pay more while the province is opening up new corporate tax loopholes? It's

a matter of fairness. That's the premise of the question, Speaker.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** It is a question of fairness. We're not opening up new loopholes. That's just not the case.

What is not fair would be for us not to continue to build transit. It would not be fair to ignore the reality that people need options. They need to be able to get on a train, or get on a bus, or get on a light-rail vehicle. They need those options in order to be able to move around the region, in order to be able to get to work in a timely way, to take their kids to school, to visit their family members.

Mr. Speaker, when I was in the 680News plane today, what I saw was as much traffic coming into Toronto as going out of Toronto, because people in Brampton and people in Newmarket and people in Durham may work there, but they also may work in the city and vice versa. People in downtown Toronto work in the region. We need to continue building transit. Not to do so would not be fair.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** People are tired of a government that cares about holding on to power but doesn't seem to care about the people who elected them. The people of Scarborough were promised a subway. Instead, they've gotten a messy, messy fight that's going nowhere fast. The people of Ontario were told that the government was going to be fair. Instead, the Liberals are moving ahead with corporate tax loopholes or Liberal policy that gives a break to corporations, letting them write off the HST. Whatever way you want to describe it, it's the same outcome. So they're going ahead with that policy while at the same time they're asking everyday people to get ready to have to dig into their pockets and pay even more. Does the Premier think that is fair?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm just going to step back from this for one second. Just so you know, we're talking about our transit policy, because we have a transit policy and we have a strategy, and we have money on the table to build transit.

What is really interesting to me is that the parties opposite have no strategy for building transit. They have absolutely no way of telling us or the people of Ontario how they would build transit going forward.

## 1100

The reality is that it costs billions of dollars. Right now there's \$16.4 billion at work building transit in this province. That's because this government has made that commitment. The reality is that without that kind of commitment, without a plan for an investment strategy going forward, without a revenue stream, we won't be able to continue building transit. The leader of the third party, to this point, has put forward no strategy for building transit going forward.



## PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** My question is for the Premier. As my leader has stated, under the strong leadership of Premiers Leslie Frost, John Robarts, Bill Davis and Mike Harris, Conservative governments have opened 64 subway stations.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That will do. It's hard to get one side when the other side chirps up when I'm trying to get quiet.

Member, put your question, please.

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess it's unfortunate that the members opposite don't wish to really know the true history. But these gentlemen I just mentioned are the true subway champions. They opened 64 subway stations—64.

In the last 10 years, under Premiers Dalton McGuinty and Kathleen Wynne, the Liberals have opened exactly none. They haven't opened one station. My question is, when are you going to open a station, and what has taken you so long?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, the party opposite is proposing an insanity. They are proposing to abandon years of planning a route that has not changed since Brad Duguid was a city councillor—the member for Scarborough Centre.

We have a fully funded, completely provincially paid-for subway to the Scarborough Town Centre that you voted against—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Even the heckling is one thing, but props is another. That will stop.

Please.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Like every other time, every other time in most of my adult life, when there was a fully funded subway plan ready to go to the right place, you voted against it, you opposed it, you stopped it, and you're trying to do the same nonsense again.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** Mr. Speaker, they have yet to answer the question. I asked a simple question: When are you going to open your first subway station? You haven't given us an answer to that yet. The only thing about you that's consistent is the fact that you always change your mind and you do nothing, and then you come along and you make nonsense announcements where you've got partners, and you don't include the partners. You don't even consider the fact that the federal government said, up until September 30, they wouldn't be prepared to make an announcement, but you've just ignored that.

The city of Toronto voted, when I was on that council and I supported it, to build that subway up to Sheppard, but you've ignored that as well. When are you going to

start listening to your partners and when are you going to get a darned subway station open?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please.

Minister.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I know they don't have many Toronto members, but the one that they do have should get out more. There are dozens of subway stations being built right now. There are boring machines all up and down the Scarborough line. There are boring machines up and down Eglinton. We are now working on extending the waterfront. There is \$16 billion being invested.

We did this once before, Mr. Speaker. We had a couple of governments that actually started building transit, and then, just at the moment the holes were all dug and the stations were open, you filled them in. As a matter of fact, the honourable member sat on his hands while they cancelled the Sherway extension in his own constituency. They filled in Eglinton.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I like Bill Davis. John Tory wouldn't be doing this. Tim Hudak would, Mike Harris would, and that's the kind of Tories you are.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. For the short moment that I have, I intend to ask you to listen to what I have to say. It's unfortunate that we do start coming to personalizing issues in the House. I have been trying my best to try to elevate the debate, and I will make a simple comment: It's not within my power to force you to do something you should intrinsically be able to do yourself.

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

**M<sup>me</sup> France G  linas:** Ma question est pour la premi  re ministre. On June 8, 2011, my community lost two good men—two miners, Jordan Fram and Jason Chenier—in a deadly accident in Stobie mine in my riding. Evidence was uncovered and shared with our community that clearly showed that their deaths were preventable. A year later, in 2012, the government finally laid nine serious charges, but yesterday we were all stunned to find out that the government had agreed to a plea bargain and dropped six serious charges.

Premier, you owe it to my community to explain. Why did your government agree to drop six charges?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** My thoughts and prayers are with the families of the two people who were lost.

The Ministry of Labour has completed its investigation, and charges were laid under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, as the member knows. A total fine of \$1.05 million plus a 25% victim fine surcharge were imposed. This is the highest total fine ever levied in Ontario for contraventions of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Protecting workers and keeping them safe on the job is the Ministry of Labour's top priority. It is what they exist

to do and, obviously, one worker killed on the job is too many. Our government will continue to work hard to protect the health and safety of workers across the province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Eleven miners have died on the job since 2007, and yesterday's plea bargain is cold comfort to the families who have lost loved ones. People in Sudbury want to know: Who in your government agreed to this plea bargain, and why did you do it? People in Sudbury want to know: Who in your government agreed to drop those six charges, and why did you do it? Because right now, for the people in Sudbury, we really don't understand how this could have been done. Speaker, I don't understand it either.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I think the member opposite knows that I don't have the details of some of the specifics that she has asked me. What I do know is that coroner's inquests are automatic for all mining and construction fatalities, so there will also be a coroner's inquest into these fatalities to follow so that more answers will be available. I think those are the kinds of reviews that need to happen. I know the Minister of Labour is working with all parties and, as I say, that coroner's inquest will follow.

## RECYCLING

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** My question is for the Minister of the Environment. When it comes to the issue of waste, I believe we all want to protect the environment and pass on a cleaner, healthier world for not only our children, but our grandchildren. I understand that embracing individual producer responsibility for managing products at the end of their lifespan here in Ontario continues to be an ongoing discussion.

Speaker, through you, can the Minister of the Environment provide the House with an update on waste management in Ontario and speak to individual producer responsibility?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** We've heard from the Environmental Commissioner, we've heard from both opposition parties, from stakeholders in the recycling system and from the public, and we've heard that the old waste diversion framework that we inherited is fatally flawed. There's a consensus that we need a new approach to increase recycling to better protect our environment.

That's why we introduced the Waste Reduction Act. The proposed act would require individual producers to be financially and environmentally accountable for recycling the goods they sell in Ontario. The act would be used to boost recycling in the lagging industrial, commercial and institutional sector.

1110

The government has been carefully reviewing public and stakeholder feedback on the act and strategy since both documents were posted on the Environmental Registry on June 6 of this year. We will continue to work with producers, with municipalities, with service organiz-

ations and with other partners to make the proposed legislation even stronger. I look forward to that input from everybody.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** Again my question is for the Minister of the Environment. Residents want to know that products at the end of their lifespan are being recycled. They want to be sure that their household hazardous wastes are being safely and properly treated.

The current 2002 legislation has been widely criticized for being inefficient, for stifling competition by mandating recycling clusters and for not rewarding design or recycling innovations. Could the Minister of the Environment please share with the House if the proposed new Waste Reduction Act would implement a new regulatory approach that transforms the municipal hazardous special waste and electrical waste programs from what they are today to producer responsibility incentives that deliver solid environmental performance?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** That's an excellent question, I must say. The answer to the member is a resounding yes. Yes, it will bring a new approach that ends the old recycling monopoly mandated in the 2002 legislation. Yes, it will implement real individual producer responsibility. Yes, it delivers solid environmental performance and economic efficiency.

In fact, the member's question reflects precisely the sentiments reflected in a news release from my very good friend from Kitchener—Conestoga. I have listened to all members of this House. I've listened to all of those who have had any direct involvement in recycling and waste diversion in the province of Ontario, and I am looking forward with enthusiasm and optimism to strong support from my good friends in the opposition.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Frank Klees:** My question is to the Premier. Just a few weeks ago at AMO, I listened very carefully as the Premier spoke to municipalities and committed that she would work with them in partnership on infrastructure and transit. Just a few days later, her transportation minister made an announcement about a subway plan that neither the TTC nor the city of Toronto—and even her agency, Metrolinx—seemed to know anything about.

I would like to know from the Premier: What happened to that spirit of co-operation that she committed to at AMO, and will she agree to set that imposed plan aside and work with the city of Toronto and the TTC to build a subway to Scarborough, the way that it was promised?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I am so pleased to be able to work with municipalities across the province because, as the member opposite knows, infrastructure investment in one part of the province looks different than in other parts of the province. The \$100 million that we have put into the roads and bridges and infrastructure fund for rural and northern Ontario will build a different kind of infrastructure than the light rail and the bus rapid transit and the subways that we're building in the GTHA.



I'm surprised that the member opposite would focus on this one line because the reality is, he knows perfectly well that York region is in drastic need of improved transit and that it's very important that we move ahead. It will be impossible to build the Yonge Street relief line that's needed in order to be able to expand into York region, because that's what has to happen in order to be able to do that, without a revenue stream. We're committed to building transit across the GTHA.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Frank Klees:** The reason I'm focusing on this one line is because that is the basis of our discussion today and it is the subject of our motion this afternoon. We are wanting very much to take the Premier up on her commitment to work co-operatively with municipal partners. Well, the municipal partners in this particular case are the TTC and the city of Toronto.

I'm asking once again: Will the Premier simply, in the spirit that she committed to work with municipalities, agree to keep the promises that the Liberal Party made, build that subway into Scarborough the way it was committed, and support our motion this afternoon? Will she do that?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** We're building the subway into Scarborough. We're building it on the same route that was detailed in the Big Move. We are building that subway. That commitment is strong, and it's funded; remember, it's funded. That \$1.4 billion is accounted for. We're ready to go, and we have to get moving.

The member opposite, my guess is—I don't know, but my guess is, when he was Minister of Transportation, he knew that there was a need to build transit in the region. My guess is that he might have advocated for transit building within his caucus. Unfortunately, no one took him up on that, if he did in fact do that advocacy, but we are.

We are building in the region. We know how important it is for the people of Newmarket, Aurora, Richmond Hill, Oshawa, Brampton and Mississauga. We know how important it is that we stay on track and build the transit that's necessary for this economy to thrive.

#### POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** My question is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Minister, students need access to good quality university programs. Students are struggling to afford the skyrocketing costs of PSE and many simply can't afford to move away from home to attend specialized research universities. Today, a leaked government report has been circulated that suggests the government could be forcing universities to specialize and reduce the range of degrees they offer.

Ontario universities already receive the least funding per student of any province in Canada. This government refuses to place students at the centre of their policies. Why is this government forging ahead with plans for drastic changes without even consulting students?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Students are at the centre of all the decisions and all the policies we're making when it comes to our post-secondary education strategies. In fact, I have been sitting down all summer with the sector in a series of round tables as we worked together to move forward and move our system into a state of global competitiveness. I've also been sitting down at the same time with students to talk about the very same issues. We've had some great input from students all summer long, and we continue to respond to that input.

I've said to the member that very soon we'll be announcing changes to flat fees, to deferral fees, something that students have been telling us they don't believe, in the current system, is fair to students. We also brought in a 30% off tuition program, which is benefitting 230,000 low- and middle-income students today across this province.

Mr. Speaker, it's all about listening to students.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Minister, forcing universities to specialize and reduce their graduate and undergraduate course offerings wasn't part of the government consultations last year, yet now, the government is forging ahead with secret discussions with unnamed educational leaders to impose such a change. Forcing universities to specialize could reduce regional access to degree programs, undermine university autonomy and lead to a system of have and have-not universities.

Will the minister stop looking for cost-saving measures behind closed doors and start consulting with students about the changes the government is secretly considering?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I'm not sure how to respond to the "secret meeting" comments because those discussions have been known by everybody, including the media. We've been talking about the fact that we've been sitting down with the sector in round tables to talk in detail. We're sitting down with students, and I've been talking to media all summer long about these so-called secret discussions.

Anybody following education in this province knows that we're working on a differentiation policy, knows that we're working on improving credit transfers so students have an easier ability to transfer through the system from college to university, from university to university and college to college. They also know we're looking at important issues like online learning. These are transformational issues. They're challenging issues, but they are places we need to go to maintain our globally competitive post-secondary system. We're going to keep working in the interest of students to ensure we continue to provide that globally competitive system.

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#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** My question today is for the Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment. Minister, a number of very important manufactur-

ing and food processing companies have operations or headquarters in my community, in my riding of Vaughan. With the global recession now behind us here in Ontario, many of my constituents have come to me with questions regarding job creation and economic development opportunities.

Now, I know that our government recognizes the strengths coming out of different parts of the province of Ontario. We also recognize that regional economic development initiatives help to create a strong climate for our domestic businesses to succeed and grow.

Speaker, through you to the minister, could the minister please provide the House with an update, one that I can take back to my constituents to let them know about what our government is doing to bolster economic development in Vaughan and around Ontario?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Thanks to the member from Vaughan for this important question.

Yesterday, with so many of my colleagues here in the Legislature—after visiting the International Plowing Match, I had the privilege of visiting Kitchener and Waterloo and making two important announcements, totalling over \$1.6 million, which helped to create more than 110 new jobs and protect and sustain nearly 500 more. These, of course, are out of the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the Southwestern and the Eastern Ontario Development Funds are among the best funds that my ministry has to support local projects and local businesses. In fact, under Premier Wynne's leadership, since February alone, these two funds have created, with the private sector partners, and retained nearly 7,000 jobs across the province. Our \$26-million investment so far has leveraged more than \$250 million from the private sector.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** I thank the minister for that very informative answer and for all of his hard work on these files. It is great to know what kind of work our government has been doing over the last number of months to support sectors across the province so that, as the minister mentioned, they can leverage investment and create good, meaningful jobs.

The people of Ontario have worked together to create a strong economy, which has relied on major sectors like manufacturing and the auto sector. Recently, of course, the Premier announced renewed funding to help promote locally grown food in the agricultural sector.

Speaker, through you to the minister, could the minister please inform the House regarding what his ministry is doing to make strategic investments into these key sectors here in Ontario?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Mr. Speaker, I had two important and, I have to say, highly interesting and informative visits yesterday. One was to a company called Conestoga Meat Packers in Breslau, employing 475 people. In fact, 50 of that workforce are employed because of the investment that this company has made together with the Ontario government. I arrived there; there's a big sign

outside, saying, "We are hiring." They're looking at 100 new employees. They're going to be increasing the plant's capacity by nearly one third. They're exporting to 30 countries around the world. It's a fantastic company.

Then I went down to Cambridge, to Kinetics Noise Control, a fascinating company as well. We're creating jobs together in partnership with them, making this investment. It's very interesting that this company actually, in the new jobs created, is producing acoustic materials used in a tunnel ventilation system for the new Sheppard subway line. So yes, we are building transit in Toronto and it's creating jobs in Cambridge.

## DRIVE CLEAN

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My question was going to be for the Minister of the Environment but I'll go to transportation because it is transportation related.

Residents in the north part of Dufferin county have been receiving letters that they are, for the first time, going to be required to complete a Drive Clean test before renewing their driver's licence. My constituents have not moved and yet they are now being asked by MTO to pay for a Drive Clean test because Canada Post has changed the postal codes.

When I wrote on behalf of residents asking for an explanation, your ministry told me it was an oversight, that they have been exempted since the program began and now they must pay. Minister, it appears that this decision to include them now, more than 10 years later, is simply another cash grab by your government. Are your recent postal code changes just another excuse for you to squeeze more money from hard-working Ontario drivers?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** The first thing, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say to the member—I want to thank her for her question and I promise I will follow up and look into the particulars of the case. I appreciate that there's some frustration there with a constituent of yours. That's the job of MPPs here and I commend her for raising the issue.

What we are trying to do is, as are other jurisdictions in Canada—and as one of the members opposite pointed out, I have some experience in one of those—is that most provinces are running to a cost recovery for automobiles. For example, my mother, who's 86, just retired. She gave up her car. It's hard to ask to put taxes on seniors to pay for things for those of us who drive cars. So when you get your driver's licence or you're paying to get the air quality standards so our kids with asthma and our seniors don't have to breathe polluted air—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew, come to order.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** —we ask people to pay modestly rather than taxing everybody. It's a cost recovery measure. It's consistent with what other provinces and what the States are doing, and it's good policy.



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. In case the member from Renfrew didn't hear it, I did ask him to come to order.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** I did not; I'm sorry.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary, please.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Minister, this is not about cost recovery; this is about a cash grab. These people did not pay. They have not been paying. They have been exempt from the Drive Clean program. I've been working on this for three months and suddenly all I'm getting from your civil service is that they must pay now and they should never have been exempt. What, are you going to go back 10 years and charge them for it?

Minister, I want this solved. I want to see this decision changed. Ultimately, I would actually like the Drive Clean program to be eliminated because it has not done anything to solve our problems.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, again, I want to thank the member opposite. She's doing her job as an MPP. I thank her for raising this issue. It's obviously a big province, and with 13 million people one of our jobs in the House is to speak up for people who sometimes get overlooked. I appreciate her doing that.

Again, it's cost recovery, one of the things this government is also doing, because by law it has to be cost recovery. We cannot overcharge for more than the cost of the service, and that's good and transparent. One of the things that my friend the Minister of Government Services, the Honourable John Milloy, is doing is that he's working on an open data process so that people will actually be able to go on and see the costs of services and they'll be able to see the price. That will be completely transparent, as we're doing. When people are planning transit lines or rapid transit lines, they can see that, for example, the Scarborough Town Centre justifies a subway and some of the other options make no sense. We're all about open data and evidence, so people can see for themselves and make their own judgment.

#### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** My question is for the Premier. It's not just the people in Scarborough who are trying to figure out what this government's transit plan is. People outside of Toronto want better transit service to get to work and travel out of town. Instead, people in Kitchener–Waterloo and nearby communities have seen our Via service cut and have been left with a GO train service that isn't meeting the transit needs of our residents.

Last night, people in St. Catharines came together because their Via service is being cut. They want to know what's going to happen with their transit in Niagara. What is the Premier going to do to improve transit in communities outside of the GTHA?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I want to thank the member for Kitchener–Waterloo because I know this is, again, a very sincere question and well asked.

The issue is this: The Conservatives in Ottawa—that would be our friends who filled in the Eglinton subway line and froze GO Transit service—also have bestowed another gift, being completely consistent in their behaviour being the contrary of their rhetoric. They cancelled half the Via service from Kitchener–Waterloo to Toronto. As a matter of fact, interestingly, there have been massive reductions on Via service. The Ontario Liberal government, as it always does, added two trains to Kitchener. We thought we were increasing the service to Kitchener by almost 50% because we realize it's important. What we didn't realize is that we were just offsetting cuts by the federal Conservatives. The same people over there that tell you they're subway champions and Via champions, when they get into power and have the—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Answer.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I regret that the people in Kitchener–Waterloo have the same service they had before. The difference is they have two more GO trains and two fewer Via trains and the feds cut the services as soon as we started it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's not just Via service. This government promised two-way all-day GO service on the line that runs to Kitchener–Waterloo and towns and cities along the line. But while the government is picking fights over a Scarborough subway, it has delayed two-way all-day GO service for almost 15 years.

The government cancelled the Ontario Bus Replacement Program, which helps municipalities like mine, without subways, to maintain their bus fleets. Commuters, students and families outside of the GTHA are wondering why their transit priorities are at the bottom of the pile. When will the Premier stop playing political games with transit and begin building transit for Ontarians who have waited long enough?

1130

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, Chair Seiling and Mayor Zehr are wonderful friends. They're non-partisan during elections. They're positive folks. They pay one third of the cost, or more sometimes, of transit in Kitchener, we pay one third and, because it doesn't have a 416 area code, the federal government pays one third. It's a great relationship.

On Scarborough, we're paying 100% of the cost, and we're building it to the only place that makes sense and the same place that's been in the plan. This is the only government that's not changing the plan. The city has changed the plan to go under single-family homes and to miss the Scarborough Town Centre. How do you build a subway to Scarborough that doesn't go to the Scarborough Town Centre? We haven't changed anything; the lines on the map are the same. The opposition suggests the lines have changed. Clearly, they don't read budgets, and they don't read maps. I should refer them to

the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities for some upgrading.

But we have added—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** This question is also for the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation. Minister, in western Mississauga, transit is a big issue. We need that planned capacity expansion of the third and the fourth track on the Milton GO line. People want to leave their cars at home, and they need viable transit options when they need to commute and when they need to go where they have to go, to go to school or to go to work.

Good transit planning and implementation is not just what you do; it's when you do it and how you do it and how you involve people in the communities along the transit corridor and in the service areas in the implementation.

Ontario uses some database tools to help plan transit routes, all derived from data from our urban environment. Would the minister please describe what data our government uses to help plan transit routes?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** As a matter of fact, the Ministry of Transportation, which does the work—not Metrolinx—has the richest databases, as does the growth secretariat. I have offered all of this data to my opposition critics so that they can see the same numbers I see. You will see why the Ministry of Transportation and Metrolinx said, “Stick to the original plan and build the subway to the Scarborough Town Centre,” because those data at Metrolinx and iCorridor are built on two things: the Big Move and Places to Grow. The Scarborough Town Centre is an urban growth centre. It will generate lots of ridership. We know that from millions of dollars and years of planning.

The same thing in Mississauga: The Hurontario LRT is absolutely critical to reducing congestion. When put through the iCorridor process, it showed that it will have a lot of investment in jobs as well as have high ridership—as will the Eglinton crosstown.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, we also modelled some of the past projects—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Minister, making decisions based on how people use transit and on what their urban environment looks like now and in the future is important. So is using technology to let people have their say and to test their opinions, to test their preconceptions and theories against what reality is now and what reality will be in the unfolding future.

The iCorridor application is open to the public, and our residents in Lisgar, Meadowvale and Streetsville would like to use it. That type of involvement would keep people from supporting idiotic policies like filling

in evidence-based subway lines that are already under construction.

Minister, how can Ontarians use the iCorridor application to see how government decisions on transit are actually made?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I appreciate the member's interest in both transit and information technology. Right now, today, you just go click, click on the MTO site, and what cascades down is the richest source of data—and open source data—there, clearly available to the TTC, to developers and to citizens to understand that—

**Interjection:** And to the opposition.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** And to the opposition. I met with some of my critics opposite, and I offered it to them. I've actually offered that our staff will give them a completely independent briefing. Metrolinx is doing this. When we actually started planning the Metrolinx projects, we did not have the advantage of this data. I gave a presentation this morning. So we are now improving our performance.

I have said to the members opposite, “If you actually believe in evidence-based decisions, based on land use, access and ridership, take the ideas.” What you'll find is the plan that was whipped out of nowhere to draw a new line has no ridership. It actually doesn't go to the Scarborough Town Centre. It goes under single-family homes, and unless you want to tear up upper-middle-class Scarborough—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

## PENSION PLANS

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is for the Minister of Finance. Minister, on May 18 three years ago, the Pension Benefits Amendment Act received royal assent after getting all-party support in this House. As you know very well, this legislation is needed to help thousands of public sector employees merge their pension benefits so that they can retire with benefits they've already paid for.

On March 30 two years ago, I asked your predecessor, the Minister of Finance, why he had since ignored this bill and not introduced the necessary regulations. At that time, his response was, “We are engaged in a range of consultations.... Those regulations will be promulgated shortly.”

Minister, can you stand up in the House today and tell us anything different on this issue than your predecessor told us two years ago?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I appreciate the question and I appreciate the concern from all sides of the House when it comes to retirement planning in the province of Ontario. Too many Ontarians—almost 40%—don't have a pension plan or a retirement savings plan. As a result, we instituted in our budget more recently—the one, by the way, that you didn't support—the pooled RRSP plan, a PRPP, an employer plan and alternatives to try to support those Ontarians in need. We will continue to also advocate for enhanced CPP with the federal government.



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Minister, I couldn't have been more fair to you. I spoke to you just after you were sworn in as Minister of Finance. I handed you a letter. I've written you five letters since last December on this issue. I've raised this in the House on several occasions. I did a private member's bill that was debated in this House and voted upon.

Thousands of paramedics, thousands of MPAC employees, through no fault of their own in the mid- to late 1990s, had their employer change. They might have been working for the Collingwood hospital ambulance service and are now working for the county of Simcoe. Their pensions would have been merged automatically if they were police officers moving from the Collingwood town police to the OPP because it's in the police act.

Four years ago, your predecessor did put it in the budget. Three years ago, it received royal assent, but we've been waiting three years. There are thousands of public servants in everyone's ridings waiting to retire. This doesn't cost you any money. You simply have to transfer the money so that all the credits are put together in one pension plan and they get the pension they paid for. When are you going to do it?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I appreciate the enthusiasm and the spirit and the concern of the member. I do. But what is important is what has been done and what we continue to do to support those Ontarians who require support. In fact, pension reform is under way. It's in this budget—something that you didn't support. We have it on page 276, talking about some of the requirements and some of the initiatives that are under way now. In fact, some of the work that we've done has actually been able to support and save taxpayers up to \$2.4 billion this year alone while protecting pensioners.

We need to ensure that a pooled pension plan exists and that all those initiatives and all those individuals have safeguards. We would support your recommendations provided you also support what's in it, and we need your help.

#### PENSION PLANS

**Mr. Michael Prue:** My question, too, is to the Minister of Finance. In April of this year, my office was contacted by Randy and Jeanette McKibbin. Randy, along with 87 other employees, was laid off when Unilever ceased to operate in 2002. The former employees have been waiting for 11 years for surplus pension funds that belong to them. As one member said, "I hope we get our money before we die."

The Financial Services Commission of Ontario has had this file since 2007, and nothing has happened except delay after delay. Speaker, the Minister of Finance seems to think that 11 years is a reasonable amount of time for these workers to wait, but my question to him is, will the minister now instruct FSCO to take immediate action on this file so that these workers can finally receive their money 11 years after the fact?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Again, I appreciate the question and I appreciate the concern being expressed. I will, in fact, endeavour to review exactly what the member is asking. We all want what's best for those families who are impacted. We want to ensure that those who have invested do have their money and we want to ensure that those who are deserving of support receive it, and I'll look into it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The minister on a point of order.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** As an MPP born and raised in Scarborough, I take great offence to remarks made by the PC leader earlier in question period—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I know where you're headed. It's not actually a point of order, except to say that any member who says anything in this House has an opportunity and a right to correct the record if they believe they've said anything that's untoward that I, myself, did not catch, or any other member did not catch. If there was anything said in this—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'll wait.

I'll provide time for any member who wants to correct their record at any time, and if there's somebody here who wants to do that now, they will be free to do so.

If not, the member from Simcoe—Grey on a point of order.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to expand the scope of the Standing Committee on Justice Policy to allow questions related to the motivation and intent of Liberal staff and advisers to meet with the Speaker regarding the Speaker's finding of a prima facie case of privilege—but shall not include the Speaker's confidential discussions.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Simcoe—Grey has asked for unanimous consent to put forward a motion. Do we agree? I heard a no.

**Mr. Rob Leone:** Come on.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Cambridge is not making himself any brownie points right now.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m.

*The House recessed from 1141 to 1500.*

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### DISASTERS IN ALGOMA-MANITOULIN

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Last week, several communities in Algoma-Manitoulin were hit hard with heavy rains, causing serious damage. Communities such as Heyden, Searchmont, Goulais River, Tarbutt and Tarbutt Additional, and Gore Bay on Manitoulin Island were all affected, while emergencies were declared in Johnson; Macdonald, Meredith and Aberdeen; Huron Shores; Plummer Additional township and Batchewana First

Nation. Parts of the Trans-Canada Highway were shut down for days, causing serious detours for motorists. Many communities, businesses and family homes were damaged, and several roads were washed away. Unfortunately, severe road damage led to the death of one individual in the area, and their family is in our thoughts and prayers.

It seems as though many communities in Algoma-Manitoulin have been affected by disasters recently. We have seen several floods, forest fires, train derailments and the fateful Algo mall disaster. Yet in the face of disaster and tragedy, what I find most remarkable is the sense of community and strong will. During the recent floods, we saw construction companies and their crews drop everything and offer assistance and their equipment. We saw dozens of volunteer firefighters work tirelessly. Emergency crews, road crews and others rushed to affected areas to assist. Chiefs, mayors and councils and their municipal staff were outstanding and continue to work around the clock. People everywhere stepped up and did what they could to help their neighbour.

What I see time and time again, as the representative of Algoma-Manitoulin, is the ability of northerners to pull through, lend a hand and leave no one behind. This is a true testament to the strong character and spirit of the people of Algoma-Manitoulin. I am proud to know them.

## SCARBOROUGH

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** Speaker, today I rise as a proud 37-year resident of Scarborough. I am very proud to have served on city council and here in this Legislature, collectively, for almost 25 years. I'm proud to be part of this Liberal government that understands Scarborough and has delivered for the people of Scarborough. I am proud of my record on better public transit. I never wavered on a subway extension in Scarborough.

Speaker, what astonished me is the lack of respect for Scarborough by members in this House across the aisle. We heard the leader of the official opposition recklessly use the term "Scarberia" to refer to the area that my constituents and I call home. His previous references to southwestern Ontario as a "rust belt" and overseas professionals as "foreigners" are simply disrespectful to building a united Ontario.

All residents of Scarborough contribute to our fair and great society and should never be disrespected. All Scarborough Liberal members will continue to fight for the people of Scarborough and champion the most diverse part of this province. We will not tolerate any sort of disrespect directed to our constituents.

Members in this House should not divide the people of Ontario and pit them against each other. I'm a very proud Ontarian and a very proud Canadian. We live in one Ontario.

## MICHAEL MCGLYNN

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** On Saturday, September 14, there was an amazing, giant event in my riding, specifically in Wingham. It was held for the first time. The local logging industry came together to host an amazing variety of activities to celebrate their industry, in memory of Michael McGlynn. I have never seen so many vehicles around the Wingham community complex. What a tribute to Michael and his family.

Proceeds from the day will be given to the Wingham and Walkerton hospital foundations, and to an online support service for troubled teens known as Wes for Youth. It will also set up the Mike McGlynn Memorial Scholarship.

Throughout the event, there were amazing examples of inspiration. I would like to share some excerpts of one particular passage—I apologize for my cold here—in the spirit of the logging industry:

Advice from a tree:

Stand tall and proud

Sink your roots deeply into the earth

Reflect the light of your true nature

Think long term

Go out on a limb

Remember your place among all living beings ...

Be flexible

Remember your roots

Enjoy the view!

I'm sure Michael really enjoyed the view on Saturday as the logging industry celebrated his memory. To close, it was a wonderful tribute to both Michael and his family, and I'd like to say, stay golden.

## STUDENT SAFETY

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** September 3 was the first day of school for Ontario students, but for one student, the day ended in tragedy. Violet Liang, who was 14 years old and by all accounts an excellent student, was struck and killed by a truck as she walked to school. My deepest condolences go out to Violet's family, friends and neighbours.

So far no charges have been laid; they're calling it an accident. I cannot understand how our society can consider it normal and acceptable that our children lack safe ways of walking or cycling to school. We spend about \$800 million a year in this province to bus kids to school, and yet there is no dedicated funding to ensure our children have safe sidewalks, protected bike lanes or crosswalks as they travel to school.

The organization Green Communities Canada is working to change this. Led by director Jacky Kennedy, in partnership with Canada Walks and Share the Road, the group's Active and Safe Routes to School program works with schools and communities to spot hazards and plan safer routes for local kids. These plans can then be implemented as part of road upgrades or repairs.



I would like to thank Ms. Kennedy and her group as well as Share the Road's Eleanor McMahon for their tireless work to improve safety for children who walk or bike to school.

#### LAW SCHOOL IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** In my 16 years of political work—six on city council in Thunder Bay and 10 as the MPP for the riding of Thunder Bay—Atikokan—Wednesday, September 4 was absolutely a red-letter day in our community. We made history on Wednesday, September 4 in Thunder Bay, at Lakehead University, when we announced the first law school in the history of northern Ontario at the Lakehead University campus in the city of Thunder Bay. Not only that, it represents the first new law school in Ontario in well over 40 years. There was an incredibly large and enthusiastic crowd for the opening, and I was very excited and pleased to have Premier Kathleen Wynne in attendance with us all that day.

This announcement for us in Thunder Bay is important on so many levels. It represents an ability for local students from Thunder Bay and northwestern Ontario to stay close to home and get their education. It represents a continuing diversification of our economy and a building of our knowledge-based economy, along with the medical school, the new law school, the Thunder Bay Regional Research Institute and the like.

In the final few seconds that I have, I do want to thank so many people who did a lot of work on this particular project: former president Gilbert, current president Brian Stevenson, the board of directors, the law society, the broader community, and mayor and council, who all lent their support to this effort.

Clearly, I have to thank our Liberal government and previous Premier McGuinty and current Premier Wynne and past Ministers of Training, Colleges and Universities, as well as my colleague Michael Gravelle. We all did a lot of work. It's very exciting, a very proud day for Thunder Bay and Lakehead University.

#### RENEWABLE ENERGY

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Communities across the province are coming to the realization that the government's Green Energy Act, with the rich subsidies paid to renewable developers under the FIT program, is unsustainable and driving our energy prices to unaffordable and economically destructive levels. More than 65 communities now, including Chisholm and Calvin townships in my riding, have declared themselves to be "not willing hosts" for industrial wind turbines. In resolutions dated August 13 and September 10 respectively, both councils state that they support the position of other Ontario municipalities that the province should impose a moratorium on the approval of wind energy projects until clear evidence is provided ruling out health impacts.

There is no clearer sign that the government's wind energy agenda is an absolute failure than their recent

move to actually pay wind developers not to produce power when we have a surplus.

**1510**

I can tell you, Speaker, that on top of the subsidies and losses from surplus power, the global adjustment has sent hydro bills in Ontario to unsustainable heights. Skyrocketing hydro costs sent Xstrata Copper of Timmins, Ontario packing for Quebec, costing 672 jobs. Again, this is with power made by wind that the Auditor General said we paid Quebec to take from us; 672 jobs were a result.

#### EVENTS IN CLAREMONT

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** Today I'd like to bring to the floor information on this weekend's village of Claremont 175th anniversary. It's a very special occasion in the city of Pickering. Claremont is up Brock Road North, as I think some of my good friends here know. It's butted between Brock Road and, on the west, the York Durham Line, which is the Toronto border, and up to the Tenth Line, which becomes Uxbridge.

I just want to mention that Claremont, in north Pickering, was located there back in 1851—sorry, prior to that, but was named in 1851 by a very popular person, William Michell, and he did that on the opening of the very first post office.

There are many events taking place. On Friday, so many of the events are free for families. You'll notice there are things like a corn roast; Fly Away Home movie, and that's by our good friend Bill Lishman, who resides in that area. Saturday: a gigantic parade and a multitude of events all day long at the park adjacent to the fire hall. On Sunday, things come to a very happy end with a morning run, an interfaith service and a potluck dinner.

Don't forget, I look forward to seeing you in Claremont, Ontario this weekend.

#### FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GROWERS

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Ontario's fruit and vegetable growers produce over 120 different crops and provide 30,000 jobs in rural Ontario.

On August 21, it was my privilege to have the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association tour my riding of Durham. The tour highlighted three family farms and orchards that achieved success through hard work, innovation and commitment to excellence.

I'd like to thank Walter and Colleen Pingle of Pingle's Farm Market in Hampton, just on Taunton Road, for their hospitality. Their market combines edutainment for families and school tours with fresh produce, pick-your-own crops, pies and pastries.

At Wilmot Orchards near Newcastle, Judi and Charles Stevens led the group on a tour of their blueberry and apple orchard. They spoke to the guests about the latest trends in crop production. Charles is also a board member of the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers'.

Mike Gibson and Kirk Kemp operate Algoma Orchards, near Newcastle. It includes a market, 700 acres of orchards, plus a state-of-the-art plant for packing apples and producing fruit juices. Kirk Kemp led the tour at Algoma, and he spoke about the advantages of the 21st-century automation in building business and jobs in Ontario.

Many thanks to the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' for visiting the riding of Durham.

Mr. Speaker, good things grow in Ontario and especially in the riding of Durham.

## BALL CONSTRUCTION

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Today I'm proud to rise in the House to congratulate 90 years of success for a local company and employer from Waterloo region, Ball Construction. When brothers Harold and Frank Ball started Ball Brothers General Contractors in 1923, their tradition of integrity, honesty and dedication would drive their business well into the 21st century. Their award-winning designs have a prominent place in Waterloo region, including the Perimeter Institute, the University of Waterloo health sciences' school of pharmacy and many more.

Now in the third generation of the Ball family, Ball Construction continues to grow and expand into the new millennium with opportunities and challenges unknown 90 years ago. Its longevity is a testament to the strength and foresight of this family-run business.

The three main partners, president Jason Ball; his cousin and the vice-president, Cameron Ball; as well as vice-president and estimating manager Gary Hauck, have kept the Ball Construction machine rolling smoothly.

With a willingness to tackle the toughest construction projects, in addition to their open-door policy for their employees and customers, Ball Construction has earned a well-deserved reputation for getting the job done. Being a respected employer for 90 years, this company provides good-quality jobs, constructing quality buildings on time and on budget around Ontario, and that's something all of us can be thankful and appreciative for.

On behalf of the Ontario Legislature, please join me in wishing Ball Construction a happy 90th anniversary and continued success in the years to come.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Anne Stokes):** Your committee begs to report the following bill without amendment:

Bill 14, An Act to amend the Co-operative Corporations Act and the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of non-profit housing co-operatives and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

*Report adopted.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The bill is therefore ordered for third reading. No further action required.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### INSURANCE AMENDMENT ACT (MINOR ACCIDENTS AND NEW DRIVERS), 2013

### LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES ASSURANCES (ACCIDENTS MINEURS ET NOUVEAUX CONDUCTEURS)

Mr. Colle moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 100, An Act to amend the Insurance Act in respect of automobile insurance risk classification systems / Projet de loi 100, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les assurances en ce qui concerne les systèmes de classement des risques en matière d'assurance-automobile.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House to agree, while it's quiet? Agreed? Agreed.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** If passed, this bill would do two things. First of all, it would give a break to young drivers and new drivers, whereby they would have a thing called first-chance discount, and it's long overdue. The second thing it would do: If you have a minor accident, less than 2,500 bucks, and you fix it yourself out of pocket, it doesn't affect your insurance rates. These are two good things in this bill.

I hope everybody will support this bill and give drivers a break in Ontario.

### SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS ELECTION ADVERTISING TRANSPARENCY ACT, 2013

### LOI DE 2013 SUR LA TRANSPARENCE DE LA PUBLICITÉ ÉLECTORALE DES GROUPES D'INTÉRÊT PARTICULIER

Mr. Nicholls moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 101, An Act to amend the Election Finances Act with respect to third party election advertising / Projet de loi 101, Loi modifiant la Loi sur le financement des élections à l'égard de la publicité électorale de tiers.



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** It's my pleasure to rise to introduce my bill, the Special Interest Groups Election Advertising Transparency Act. This bill actually seeks to amend the Election Finances Act to place a cap on the amount of money special interest groups could spend on advertising during provincial elections, which is something all three parties have agreed to in the past.

The bill will allow Ontario to catch up to Quebec, British Columbia, Alberta, New Brunswick and the federal government, which have already placed limits on special interest election advertising.

I encourage all members to support this piece of legislation.

1520

#### SENCHURA HOLDINGS LTD. ACT, 2013

Mr. Prue moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr24, An Act to revive Senchura Holdings Ltd.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to standing order 86, this bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

#### ARCHIVES AND RECORDKEEPING AMENDMENT ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT

#### LA LOI SUR LES ARCHIVES PUBLIQUES ET LA CONSERVATION DES DOCUMENTS

Mr. Tabuns moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 102, An Act to amend the Archives and Record-keeping Act, 2006 to impose penalties for offences relating to public records of archival value / Projet de loi 102, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2006 sur les Archives publiques et la conservation des documents pour imposer des peines en cas d'infraction relative aux documents publics ayant un intérêt archivistique.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** The bill amends the Archives and Recordkeeping Act, adding a provision making it an offence to contravene section 15 of the act, which requires that records of ministerial and government decisions be kept. Any intent to deprive the public of those archives can be punished with a fine of up to \$50,000.

#### PROTECTING STUDENTS ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 PROTÉGÉANT LES ÉLÈVES

Mrs. Sandals moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill 103, An Act to amend the Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996 with respect to discipline and other related matters / Projet de loi 103, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1996 sur l'Ordre des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'Ontario en ce qui concerne la discipline et d'autres questions connexes.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Speaker, I'll make my statement during ministerial statements.

#### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

#### TEACHERS

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Speaker, I'd like to begin by welcoming Mr. Michael Salvatori, who is the registrar of the Ontario College of Teachers, to the Legislature this afternoon.

I am proud to introduce the Protecting Students Act, which, if passed, would protect our students and strengthen public confidence in the Ontario College of Teachers.

We know that the vast majority of Ontario teachers do an excellent job supporting our students. Every day, they put their hearts and souls into their classrooms, and they share our commitment to giving their students the opportunity to learn and develop in a safe and respectful school community.

However, in the rare circumstances where teacher discipline is required, families, parents, students and teachers deserve a fair and transparent process that maintains the public interest and protects our children. Together with the Ontario College of Teachers, we have a shared interest in maintaining public confidence in the investigation and disciplinary process, and have worked hard to reinforce public trust.

That is why, in September 2011, the Ontario College of Teachers appointed the Honourable Patrick LeSage to review its investigation and disciplinary procedures and dispute resolution program. In June 2012, Justice LeSage released a report that contained 49 recommendations to modernize the Ontario College of Teachers' investigation and discipline practices.

Since then, our government has been working with the college to address all 49 of the recommendations. Many of these recommendations were in areas where the college could take immediate and independent action. For example, in 2012, the college began to post outcomes of

disciplinary proceedings on its website to ensure that these decisions were open and transparent to the public. We are pleased that the college moved fast to implement many of the changes, but in order to fully implement all of the recommendations, we need to make legislative changes.

If passed, the Protecting Students Act would deliver on the remaining recommendations of Justice LeSage's report. The proposed legislation and subsequent regulations would improve the college's disciplinary processes, reduce the potential of conflicts of interest, and help protect students and teachers by taking the following actions:

- ensuring a teacher's certificate is automatically revoked if he or she has been found guilty of sexual abuse or acts relating to child pornography;

- requiring school boards to inform the college when they have restricted a teacher's duties or dismissed him or her for misconduct;

- allowing the college to share information with the school board if the subject of a complaint poses an immediate risk to a student;

- requiring the college to publish all decisions from its discipline committee;

- imposing new timelines to resolve cases more quickly and efficiently;

- avoiding potential conflicts of interest by preventing union or association representatives from sitting on the college's council, where college policy is developed and approved; and

- finally, requiring that a disciplinary panel hearing a matter relating to a principal or vice-principal must include a principal or vice-principal.

As a government, we strive to maintain the highest levels of accountability and transparency, and we expect the same of all organizations that operate in the public interest. Most importantly, parents and students expect a public education system that is fair, transparent and accountable, and they need to be able to easily find answers to questions that they may have about disciplinary proceedings and decisions.

Speaker, this is an important step that our government is taking to make sure Ontario families continue to have confidence that their children are safe and protected in Ontario schools. I look forward to having every member of this House stand behind and support this very important bill.

### HOME INSPECTORS

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** It's my pleasure to rise in the House today to mark an important step in our government's ongoing work to help consumers in this province spend their hard-earned money wisely. For many people, buying a house is the biggest investment they will make in their lifetime, one that represents much more than a simple dollars-and-cents transaction. For many people, it's also a chance to start a new life or make a dream come true.

But people looking to buy a home have so many questions about its condition when buying a house; for example, are the plumbing and electrical operating systems working properly? Is mould creeping into the washrooms? Is the roof likely going to need replacing anytime soon? These are just some of the questions people want answered, and a sound home inspection conducted by a trained professional can provide these answers.

Currently, though, there are no mandatory qualifications for home inspectors in Ontario. Anyone can call themselves a home inspector and conduct such inspections. That means consumers may not have the protections they deserve. The government wants to do something about that, and that's why we are developing qualifications for home inspectors in this province.

### 1530

In June of this year, my ministry brought together stakeholders from across the home inspection industry for a kickoff meeting. The meeting was a great success. Many stakeholders attended, including home inspector organizations and companies; groups from related areas such as the real estate and insurance sectors; and administrative authorities such as the Real Estate Council of Ontario, the Electrical Safety Authority and Tarion, who work hand in hand with government to develop and enforce regulations related to home inspections. It is the first time, the very first time, many key players in Ontario's home inspection industry had come together to share ideas, and they covered a number of key topics related to the home inspection sector.

I'm very happy to report that a few weeks ago, we took the next step in our consultation. We took the feedback from our stakeholder meeting in June and we gave it to a panel of experts who have been assembled to draft a findings and recommendations report. In fact, I was very pleased to attend the kickoff meeting of the expert panel. I was very impressed that the panel was made up of people from across the sector, as well as people from across the province.

This panel is meeting regularly until November. There are 16 different professionals on the panel, as I mentioned, such as home inspectors, associations and businesses. Of course, we have consumers on this panel, and people in related sectors.

We've asked them to develop a report that will be posted on the Ministry of Consumer Services website for public and industry comment. I look forward to reading the report's recommendation on how to proceed with strengthening consumer protection for homebuyers and sellers and developing qualifications for home inspectors.

I'd like to acknowledge the work of this expert panel and the stakeholders who are assisting us in this process. These people have given of their personal time to help us with this important consultation.

We're taking this collaborative approach because we know the public and industry can help shape good future public decisions. And, as I've shared with this House previously, we've been working on a similar public engagement regarding the province's Condominium Act, with a



view to long-term improvements to this piece of legislation that directly affects the lives of over a million condo dwellers in Ontario.

When I've spoken to people across the province about this innovative consultative process, I've also stressed three important things. These are applicable to work we're undertaking on the home inspectors, starting today.

First, we're working with the experts to lay the foundation for the legislation. We're going straight to on-the-ground voices for the kind of knowledge and expertise we need to start the process of building these qualifications for home inspectors.

Second, our work is being driven by a spirit of consensus. Coming up with common solutions and not getting stuck on the small differences is crucial to the collaboration. In fact, many people who've already been working closely with us on the Condominium Act review have told me just how persuasive this spirit of open discussion and consensus has been in that process.

Third, we're looking at developing and implementing the home inspector qualifications as a long-term proposition, as a way of benefiting practitioners across the crucial market and protecting the rights and interests of consumers for many years to come.

These three themes are crucial to our success in the consultation on home inspectors, and we're very confident they will help us and the stakeholders involved to build qualifications that are right for home inspectors in this province.

Our government is engaging with people across Ontario. We're listening to them, they're listening to each other, and we're acting on thoughtful advice. Real collaboration that delivers real solutions is a cornerstone of our government, and that's the way forward for better public policy.

Speaker, I look forward to providing the Legislature with further updates on this important work to develop mandatory qualifications for home inspectors in Ontario, as part of our overall plan to help people in their everyday lives through stronger consumer protection.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is now time for responses.

### TEACHERS

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As you are well aware, in September 2011, the Ontario College of Teachers commissioned Justice Patrick LeSage to review its investigation and discipline procedures and outcomes and dispute program. Justice LeSage responded with 49 recommendations, all of which the Ministry of Education has agreed to address in its proposed bill today, which we just received.

It is of the utmost importance that we always work to ensure the safety of students in our schools. Improving the investigation and disciplinary process, as well as increasing protection for students from sexual offences in schools, are things that I am confident all parties in the House will support going forward.

The PC Party and I myself have always been strongly supportive of all endeavours and legislation intent on improving the safety of students in our school system. As always, I do stress, however, that it's important that we first see the bill that is proposed today and make any necessary changes to the proposed legislation. All points in the bill must be reviewed in detail in order for us to guarantee that the bill serves its purpose and works to protect students and makes their safety our priority.

I look forward to working with the Minister of Education in granting the OCT all the tools it needs to promote safety in Ontario schools. As a member of OCT myself, I and my esteemed colleagues from my past career obviously do have the safety of students foremost in our thoughts and minds, moving forward.

That being said, again, it's important that we read the details of the bill, which we just received today, and I'm sure there will be time later, when we discuss and debate the bill—I'll be looking at those particulars.

### HOME INSPECTORS

**Mr. Jim McDonnell:** A home is the largest expense that an average family will incur in their lifetime. Financing a home purchase is a long-term commitment that affects a family's financial planning for decades to come. Home ownership is a source of stability and a sign of support and commitment to a community, a neighbourhood and a region.

Ownership of one's own home is a source of security for a family. The benefits of a fully paid-off property, not bound by lease agreements and rules, is an assurance that, come what may, family members can expect to have a roof over their heads, regardless of what's happening.

Purchasers of a newly built home benefit, with some limitations, from the protections of Tarion's new home warranty plan. For many buyers, however, the safety of their largest life investment often lies in the hands of an expert that they trust to assess the home for defects and hazards.

I know several home inspectors and can attest to the passion they bring to the job, seeking to ensure that the consumer is fully informed about the product they are trying to buy. Unfortunately, most good stories go unnoticed by the public.

Every consumer expects the transaction to be pleasant and the service to be top-notch. However, when a home inspection fails to spot the need for tens of thousands of dollars of repairs, the buyer's finances take a huge hit and you have a new story.

Home inspectors in Ontario abide by their association's regulations and codes of conduct, developed over many years. Providing consumers with the added certainty of a professional licence to accompany the title of home inspector is worth talking about, and we look forward to engaging the government and the stakeholders on the issue.

I previously filed an order paper question on this topic and was told that the area of home inspections was not a

priority for ministry regulation, due to the low number of complaints.

Considering the value of the investment in question, I see licensing consultations as a step in the right direction. But we must ensure that this doesn't just create an extra mire of red tape and added cost for the consumer, without measurable results.

We look forward to seeing the consultation and commenting on it, and to the legislation coming forward. We commend the government for taking this initiative.

## TEACHERS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Every child deserves to feel safe in their school. Every parent expects that their child will be safe in their school. We would all agree that anyone who sexually abuses a child should not be in the classroom.

The bill introduced today should be a step forward to ensure that those expectations are met; that those safeties, those securities, are in place. The public expects the Ontario College of Teachers and this Legislature to take this matter seriously and to deal with it expeditiously.

1540

Speaker, I look forward to debating this bill through the public hearings, and I hope that it is brought forward very promptly by this government.

## HOME INSPECTORS

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** The file regarding consumer services is an area which requires a great deal of attention. With respect to this home inspector expert panel, I first must indicate very clearly, on behalf of the NDP, that we encourage and support the principle of consultations, the idea of obtaining input from stakeholders and from the public. It is essential to obtain that before we present legislation. That is a principle that we wholeheartedly support, and in that light, I appreciate the government's initiative.

I also appreciate the hard work of the panel members and the panel in general, but—there's always a but—there are many areas in which the consumer services file cries out for attention. Often, the solution begins with a consultation process, but it does not end there. Where it ends is in action, and that's what we see is lacking in many files, particularly when it comes to consumer services.

There are a number of areas, like Tarion—if we're talking about homeowners, it's one of the only services provided. It's a monopoly. The only way you can receive insurance is through Tarion. However, many consumers are complaining that Tarion simply does not meet their needs; it simply does not protect their interests.

Auto insurance is another area where we see individuals crying out for attention, to see the rates reduced. The rates we are paying in Ontario are some of the highest in the entire country, and people are crying out for some attention. They need these rates to come down. So while

we support the initiative of obtaining information and obtaining consultation and input from the public, we need to see some action.

With respect to the home inspections, the consultations have resulted in a tentative agreement, after two meetings, about the importance of having a common level of professionalism in the industry. That applies to every industry, and I think that every citizen in Ontario expects that every industry has a common level of professionalism. So the fact that the panel has come to that agreement—while I respect their work, that's something that we all already understand.

What we need to see from this government is more action. So I ask this government to take action on the home file by ensuring that home inspectors are regulated and receive an adequate level of certification.

I call on this government to act on Tarion: to ensure that Tarion is fulfilling their duties in protecting the interests of the consumers, by providing protection when the home faces incidents or problems that require insurance coverage—and are not simply being denied their claims, time and time again.

Again, I ask this government to take action on the auto insurance file, where the high costs simply need to be addressed.

The condo file: The condominium issue in this province is an area that is crying out for attention. There is a myriad of problems facing condo owners and condo dwellers, and these areas have yet to be addressed. Years and years of complaints have been received, but there has been no action.

This is a common theme with this government. There is inaction where we need some definitive steps to be taken, particularly in the interest of protecting consumers.

I ask, Mr. Speaker, that the government take some real action and start working for the best interests of consumers in Ontario.

## PETITIONS

### OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the province of Ontario is the only province in Canada that does not allow the provincial Ombudsman, who is an officer of the Legislature, to provide trusted, independent investigations of complaints against hospitals, long-term-care homes, school boards, children's aid societies, police, retirement homes and universities; and

"Whereas the people wronged by these institutions are left feeling helpless and most have nowhere else to turn for help to address their issues;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:



"To grant the Ombudsman of Ontario the power to investigate hospitals, long-term-care homes, school boards, children's aid societies, police, retirement homes and universities."

I will affix my signature and send it down with Ravicha.

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I have a petition that reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas agencies that support individuals with a developmental disability and their families have for several years (beginning in 2010) faced a decline in provincial funding for programs that support people with developmental and other related disabilities; and

"Whereas because this level of provincial funding is far less than the rate of inflation and operational costs, and does not account for providing services to a growing and aging number of individuals with complex needs, developmental service agencies are being forced into deficit; and

"Whereas today over 30% of developmental service agencies are in deficit; and

"Whereas lowered provincial funding has resulted in agencies being forced to cut programs and services that enable people with a developmental disability to participate in their community and enjoy the best quality of life possible; and

"Whereas in some cases services once focused on community inclusion and quality of life for individuals have been reduced to a 'custodial' care arrangement; and

"Whereas lower provincial funding means a poorer quality of life for people with a developmental disability and their families and increasingly difficult working conditions for the direct care staff who support them; and

"Whereas there are thousands of people waiting for residential supports, day program supports and other programs province-wide;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"(1) To eliminate the deficits of developmental service agencies and provide adequate new funding to restore services and programs that have in effect been cut;

"(2) To protect existing services and supports by providing an overall increase in funding for agencies that is at least equal to inflationary costs that include among other operational costs, utilities, food and compensation increases to ensure staff retention;

"(3) To fund pay equity obligations for a predominant female workforce;

"(4) To provide adequate new funding to agencies to ensure that the growing number of families on wait-lists have access to accommodation supports and day supports and services."

I am in agreement. This petition is signed by hundreds and hundreds of people from across Ontario. I will send it down with page Aly Muhammad.

#### FAMILY SAFETY

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I have a petition that's addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas the Safer Families Program ... is a successful partnership of Catholic Family Services Peel-Dufferin, Family Services of Peel and the Peel Children's Aid Society, receives year-to-year funding from the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services, and is a critical component of social services to families within the Peel community; and

"Whereas the intervention model for Safer Families currently operates with no waiting lists, an important consideration for families experiencing domestic violence and child protection concerns, as they require immediate access to service; and

"Whereas the Safer Families Program is aligned with Ontario's child poverty agenda, is committed to preventing violence against women, and contributes to community capacity building to support child welfare delivery; and

"Whereas currently, Safer Families serves 14% of all domestic violence cases referred to Peel Children's Aid Society and has the ability to double the number of cases it handles...;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario adjust its funding to supply ongoing core funding rather than year-to-year funding, and realign funding to double the percentage of cases referred by the Peel Children's Aid Society and served by the Safer Families Program."

I'm pleased to sign this petition and send it down to the table with page Massoma from Meadowvale.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please. The member from Bramalea-Gore-Malton on a point of order.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for this indulgence. I'd ask the House to join me in welcoming a guest of mine who's a YouTube celebrity, a hip hop artist and a well-known member of the salvation community: Kanwer Singh Mahl, also known as Humble the Poet.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It's a little unorthodox—there's time set aside for that—but I understand the member's zeal to introduce a friend.

The member from Simcoe-Grey on petitions.

1550

#### PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank Mrs. Fran Scherrer from Collingwood

for sending me this petition about physiotherapy cuts in the province.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ministry of Health is planning on cutting physiotherapy services to seniors in long-term-care homes—from an estimated \$110 million to \$58.5 million; and

"Whereas with this change seniors will not receive the care they are currently entitled to through their current OHIP physiotherapy providers, who the government plans to delist from OHIP on August 1st, 2013; and

"Whereas the government has announced that the funding level, the number of treatments a resident could receive, has not been specified and will be reduced from a maximum of 150 visits/year to some unknown level, which means the hours of care and number of staff providing seniors with physiotherapy will also be significantly reduced as of August 1st, 2013; and

"Whereas our current OHIP physiotherapy providers have been providing seniors with individualized treatments for over 48 years, and these services have been proven to help seniors improve in their activities of daily living, mobility, pain and falls risk;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To review and reverse this drastic cut of OHIP physiotherapy services to seniors, our most vulnerable population, and to continue with the \$110 million physiotherapy funding for seniors in long-term-care homes."

I agree with this petition and I will sign it.

#### AIR-RAIL LINK

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas diesel trains are a health hazard for people who live near them;

"Whereas more toxic fumes will be created by the 400 daily trains than the car trips they are meant to replace;

"Whereas the planned air-rail link does not serve the communities through which it passes and will be priced beyond the reach of most commuters;

"Whereas all major cities in the world with train service between their downtown core and the airport use electric trains;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the province of Ontario stop building the air-rail link for diesel and move to electrify the route immediately;

"That the air-rail link be designed, operated and priced as an affordable transportation option between all points along its route."

Speaker, I'll sign my name to this petition, which I agree with, and will give it to page James.

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario has 634 long-term-care facilities providing care for 75,000 residents; and

"Whereas hospitals in Ontario report seeing nursing home patients admitted who are suffering from neglect; and

"Whereas several incidents of neglect prompted the Long-Term Care Task Force on Resident Care and Safety to release an action plan; and

"Whereas caring for the increasing number of patients with cognitive difficulties requires more time for front-line staff to manage patient needs; and

"Whereas staffing levels in Ontario's nursing homes are below the national average (Statistics Canada); and

"Whereas Ontario does not have a minimum staffing ratio;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Liberal government ensures front-line care and staffing levels receive funding precedence over administrative costs."

Thank you very much, Speaker. I agree with this petition. I affix my signature, and I'll send it to the desk with Jasper.

#### EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I have a petition from people from across Ontario. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas servers and bartenders in Ontario earn \$8.90 an hour, far less than the minimum wage; and

"Whereas tips are given to servers and bartenders for good service and to supplement the lower wages they receive; and

"Whereas Ontario law allows for owners and managers to pocket a portion of servers' and bartenders' earned tips or total sales; and

"Whereas thousands of servers across the province have asked for this practice to stop;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Support the swift passage of Bill 49, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act with respect to tips and other gratuities and thereby end the practice of 'tip-outs' to management and owners."

I agree with this petition. I will affix my name to it and give it to page Ian to present.

#### FAMILY CAREGIVER LEAVE

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario deserve to be able to look after their sick or injured family members without



fearing that they will lose their jobs at such a vulnerable time;

"Whereas the people of Ontario deserve to be able to spend time looking for a child that has disappeared, or take time off to grieve the death of a child that was murdered without fearing that they will lose their jobs;

"Whereas the federal government has recently extended similar leaves and economic supports to federal employees;

"Whereas the government of Ontario, and the Premier of Ontario, support Ontario families and wish to foster mental and physical well-being by allowing those closest to sick or injured family members the time to provide support free of work-related concerns;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario pass and enact, during spring of 2013, Bill 21, the Leaves to Help Families Act."

I fully support it, affix my signature and give it to page Sean.

#### FISHING AND HUNTING REGULATIONS

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'm pleased to present a petition from the riding of Durham that reads as follows:

"Whereas the McGuinty/Wynne government has drastically reduced the number of Ontario hunting and fishing regulation booklets available to the public; and

"Whereas regulations in printed booklets are the most portable and convenient format for outdoorspersons to consult in the field, while hunting or fishing; and

"Whereas in addition to the Internet being unavailable in remote locations, many Ontarians do not have Internet access, or prefer information in print rather than electronic format; and

"Whereas those who hunt and fish pay substantial amounts each year to purchase outdoor cards, hunting licences and fishing licences and it is reasonable to expect that a booklet explaining the regulations should be provided as a courtesy; and

"Whereas Ontario hunters and anglers need to access the most current regulations to ensure they enjoy hunting and fishing safely and lawfully;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, ask the Ministry of Natural Resources to respect the wishes of Ontario anglers and hunters by providing hunting and fishing regulations in booklet form to everyone who needs one."

I'm pleased to sign and support it and present it to Gabrielle, one of the new pages.

#### HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Jim McDonnell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Green Energy Act has driven up the cost of electricity in Ontario due to unrealistic subsidies for certain energy sources, including the world's highest subsidies for solar power; and

"Whereas this cost is passed on to ratepayers through the global adjustment, which can account for almost half of a ratepayer's hydro bill; and

"Whereas the high cost of energy is severely impacting the quality of life of Ontario's residents, especially fixed-income seniors; and

"Whereas it is imperative to remedy Liberal mismanagement in the energy sector by implementing immediate reforms detailed in the Ontario PC white paper Paths to Prosperity—Affordable Energy;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately repeal the Green Energy Act, 2009, and all other statutes that artificially inflate the cost of electricity with the aim of bringing down electricity rates and abolishing the expensive surcharges such as the global adjustment and debt retirement charges."

I agree with this petition and will be passing it off to page Massoma.

#### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Scarborough residents north of Ontario Highway 401 and east of Don Mills are without a rapid transit option; and

"Whereas a strong transit system is critical for increasing economic development and tackling income disparity; and

"Whereas this geographical area continues to grow and the demand for strong rapid transit continues to increase; and

"Whereas Sheppard Avenue is a major artery for automobile traffic for commuters travelling from suburbs to downtown Toronto, and travelling from suburb to suburb; and

"Whereas ground-level rapid transit would increase traffic, restrict lanes for automobiles, and add further risk for pedestrians and commuters at dangerous intersections along Sheppard Avenue; and

"Whereas demands for underground rapid transit along Sheppard Avenue have been part of public discourse for over 50 years; and

"Whereas the province of Ontario previously approved a plan from the city of Toronto to extend the Sheppard subway line from Downsview to Scarborough Centre; and

"Whereas an extension to the Sheppard subway line will require contributions and co-operation from the city of Toronto, the province of Ontario and the government of Canada;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To support the extension of the Sheppard subway line east to Scarborough Centre; and

"To call upon all levels of government to contribute multi-year funding for the construction and operation of an extension to the Sheppard subway line."

I fully support it and give it to page Ravicha.

### TIRE DISPOSAL

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I have a petition here signed by a great many people from all around the province of Ontario. It is:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario government has approved massive increases to Ontario Tire Stewardship's eco fees for agricultural tires, increasing some fees from \$15.29 to \$352.80, \$546.84 or \$1,311.24;

"Whereas Ontario imposes tire eco fees that are dramatically higher than those in other provinces;

"Whereas other provincial governments either exempt agricultural tires from recycling programs or charge fees only up to \$75;

"Whereas these new fees will result in increased costs for our farmers and lost sales for our farm equipment dealerships;

"Whereas the PC caucus has proposed a new plan that holds manufacturers and importers of tires responsible for recycling, but gives them the freedom to work with other businesses to find the best way possible to carry out that responsibility;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Please suspend the decision to significantly increase Ontario Tire Stewardship's fees on agricultural and off-the-road tires pending a thorough impact study and implementation of proposals to lower costs."

Thank you very much for the opportunity to present this petition on their behalf, Mr. Speaker.

1600

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made in the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business such that Mr. McDonnell assumes ballot item number 46 and Mr. Ouellette assumes ballot item number 64.

### OPPOSITION DAY

#### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** I move that the Legislative Assembly calls upon the government

To recognize that world-class cities build subways;

To recognize that the government voted against building subways for Scarborough last year and only promised a new subway to win a seat in the recent by-elections;

To recognize that the government promised to fund \$1.8 billion for subway expansion in Scarborough, only to go back on their commitment with less money and

fewer stops, and are now only putting forward \$1.4 billion.

And that the Legislative Assembly calls upon the Liberal government to live by the promises made during the last by-election, and build a world-class transportation system that includes a Scarborough subway from Kennedy station to Sheppard Avenue and that it be implemented in collaboration with city council and Metrolinx.

Addressed to the Premier.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Mr. Holyday has moved opposition day number 1. Mr. Holyday?

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** It's my pleasure to address this House. As you know, this is my first formal speech, and I'm very proud to be making it.

On this particular subject, I personally have quite a history in debating subways. I've been on the city of Toronto council since 1997. I was on Metro council before that, from 1994, and I was on the Etobicoke council from 1982. During that time, on several occasions, the matter of subways came up.

I guess what I want to stress is the importance of subways over LRTs. I know that the government has been supportive of LRTs in the past. A lot of people are supportive of LRTs, and they are for certain reasons. The reasons are that they're less expensive and easier to build, and I guess you could do it quicker. But the problem with them is that it's a short-term solution to a long-term problem.

LRTs will do the job for 30 or 35 years, but subways are in there and are underground, and they'll do the job for well over a hundred years. Cities like London and New York have built subways because that's the best system. That's the system that moves people best and does not take away the capacity of roads to handle people on the surface.

It's anticipated that by 2035, we will have, I believe it's going to be, close to another million people, if not more, in the greater Toronto area, and it's going to be important for us to build to provide the transportation those people will require. If we cut the capacity of our roads by cutting them in half with light rail transit, that's certainly not going to do the job. Light rail transit doesn't move as many people as quickly as subways, and although it might work in the short term, once we get out 50 years from now, that system will simply not work. So we must build subways.

What should have happened in the past—30, 35 years ago—we should have been building subways every single year. We should have been building a little bit each and every year. That's what's happened in New York, and that's what's happened in London and other cities that have great subway systems. Unfortunately, it didn't happen here, but it has to start sometime.

The purpose of this motion is to get everybody on the side of subways. I think they are on the side of subways now. I don't think everyone was always on the side of subways, but they are now, and it's most important that we get on with the job. The cost, of course, is great, but



we have to find the money. I suggest that we can find the money by simply prioritizing our spending. We have money to spend; we just choose ways to spend it that maybe aren't what the majority of the taxpayers want. If we put it to the taxpayers on how they would like their money spent, I think you would find that the majority of them would like to have the transit in this city improved.

The gridlock is horrible. I know for my trip out to Etobicoke, in non-rush hour, I can do it in half an hour, but during rush hour it's going to be over an hour, sometimes an hour and a quarter. A lot of people I see on Spadina are sitting on that part of the road for 35 or 45 minutes. It's just not conducive to a good environment. It wastes fuel. It wastes people's time. It puts stress on everybody.

This has to be stopped. This can only be stopped, I believe, by a good rapid transit system based on subways. So I'm urging the members on all sides of this House to come together and support this motion.

We've heard a lot of comments made. I know one that keeps coming back, particularly from the other side of the House, is about Mike Harris filling in the hole on Eglinton Avenue. Well, I'd like to tell you exactly what happened. That had a large part to do with the Metropolitan Toronto council, and I sat on the Metropolitan Toronto council. What happened at that time was, the NDP government, under Bob Rae, had decided they were going to build three subways—

**Interjection:** But they had no money.

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** —but they didn't have any money. They started to build the Eglinton subway. An election was in the offing. I think they thought that that might help their chances. They started to build that subway without any money at all.

When Mike Harris and the Conservatives came in in 1995, they quickly told the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, "We cannot afford to build these three subways. We don't have the money. You don't have the money. The money is not coming from the tooth fairy. There is no way of getting the money to build these three subways. We're going to find the money to build one. Which one do you want?" Metropolitan Toronto council took a vote, and on a very slim margin they voted to build the Sheppard subway. As a result of that decision, the only choice that the provincial government had at the time was to fill in Eglinton Avenue. You couldn't just leave the hole. I think it cost \$100 million. They did not have the \$2 billion or \$3 billion that it would have taken to finish the job. It simply was not there. We had gone through a recession. We had gone through Rae days, which were very disturbing to municipalities. Any of you who were on municipal councils at the time will know that a lot of good people were shown the door over the fact that we just couldn't pay as many people anymore. So all those things came into play, and as a result of that, the Eglinton line was filled in.

I would also like to correct something that was said this morning, on the other side of the House, about my own support for subways. My support for subways has

always been constant. One of the problems, of course, is that you can't build them if you don't have the resources to build them. But certainly in the last term of council, where Mayor Rob Ford has been 100% behind building subways—and I've been 100% behind Rob Ford—there has been no wavering whatsoever on what I wanted and what he wanted. We wanted subways. You know that there was a group prior to that that wanted light rapid transit and they were going to put it in the middle of all the main roads throughout the city, and unfortunately, they had the backing of this provincial government to do it. As you recall, they were going to raise taxes at one point—new revenue tools, I think they called them—to try to pay for that. Well, that isn't the way that this should work. I think that there might be some call down the road for some taxes for this, but it can't be the going-out-the-door position. It has to be after you've looked at all other possibilities of paying for it—before you'd ever come up with new taxes.

I'm also surprised now that the government has taken the position of making their announcement on the new subway in Scarborough that follows the line not recommended by the city of Toronto council. I participated in the debate that took place last July, and it was a continuation of debates that have gone on there for the last couple of years. That council quite vehemently, and with a strong majority, said that they wanted to have the subway go from Kennedy station to Sheppard, and they told the route—that they wanted it on that underground route. I still don't understand how the government of Ontario could combine and announce a plan that isn't in keeping with what the city of Toronto council asked for.

1610

I also fail to understand how they could make comments about the federal government when the federal government said that they would consider funding this and let us know by September 30. It seemed that we were too impatient here. We couldn't wait for September 30. We had to come out with another plan that, even though it just discarded any contribution by the federal government and even though it was not in compliance with what the city of Toronto council voted on, just did it anyway.

Then, after all is said and done, they now announce they're going to have a new task force to take a look at subways in Toronto. I think the public has every right to ask: What in the world is going on down there? What is wrong with these people? Why can't they just make a decision and stick with it?

I'll tell you what changes people's minds, and that's a thing like that by-election, where the voters in Scarborough let it be known loud and clear: They wanted subways. I know the government position had to change as a result of that and they had to get off the LRT and they had to get off the new revenue tools to build the LRT and they had to finally come around to seeing that it was going to be subways.

So this motion is just to keep them on track. Let's have this decision made and let's have a solid decision

backed by all sections of this Legislature and get on with building subways in the city of Toronto.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I rise on behalf of the people of Davenport to speak to this motion on transit investments. I also rise today to share my profound frustration with this provincial Liberal government, with the mayor of this city and with the Conservative government of Canada for the embarrassing politics that we see right now when it comes to transit. I'm afraid to say that my frustration actually reflects quite accurately the frustration of Davenport residents and of people across the region.

I'd encourage members in this House to get on transit, to wait for a bus, to wait for a streetcar, to try to get on a subway in the morning, and you will understand what I'm saying. You will understand the people of the GTA, because people in the GTA are crippled by gridlock. People from Davenport to Scarborough are losing hours of their lives stuck in traffic or waiting for transit. It's time they could be spending with their families and with their loved ones, because people in the GTA and the Hamilton area have the longest commute times in North America.

Today's motion by the Conservative Party is yet another political game that only aims at scoring political points for the PC Party instead of supporting commuters in the GTHA. Today's debate has been focused on the transit needs of Scarborough, a region that is now in the crosshairs of political strategists at Queen's Park and city hall. But Scarborough is a part of our city that has been ignored for too long. The people of Scarborough and people across the GTHA need less games, they need less politics, they need less conversation and they need more action when it comes to transit. The people of Scarborough and across our region deserve good, affordable, dependable, rapid public transit.

It's clear that people in Scarborough feel like they've been getting second-class treatment, and the political games that they've seen from both Liberals and Conservatives are only making things worse. The Liberals have been making promises for 10 years now. For 10 years they have done nothing to get transit for Scarborough. We've heard promise after promise, but commuters are stuck waiting longer and longer to get home. Liberals claim that transit is a priority, but I think their record speaks for itself.

My community of Davenport knows a few things about Liberal priorities and Liberal promises. Just last night, over 100 residents of the west end of Toronto gathered for yet another Metrolinx meeting to register their opposition again to the Liberal government's plan to run dirty diesel trains in our neighbourhoods on the UP express air-rail link. Since day one, residents of my riding have fought for clean electric trains that would actually serve our communities instead of polluting them. But this Liberal government still plans to open the line with diesel trains. The Liberal government claims they

will convert these trains to electric in the near future. They claim that the electrification of the air-rail link is a priority. But the truth is that neither the Premier nor the Minister of Transportation has ever publicly committed to electrifying the line. We don't have an official timeline from this minister or from this government, but we have seen—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** Let's hear it. I hope that the minister will make a public commitment today, Speaker.

We have seen an abundance of public relations and consultations, but we've seen not enough listening from this government. People across Ontario know that Liberals will say anything to get elected and to stay in power, as they did when they spent more than half a billion dollars of our money, the money that belongs to the people of this province, to cancel gas plants just to save the jobs of Liberal MPPs. Even still, it was still disappointing to see the Liberals make more campaign promises in the recent Scarborough election that were so clearly about putting their own political interests first.

This Liberal government cannot be trusted to deliver transit in Scarborough or anywhere else. It should be obvious to all observers that the Conservatives are not transit champions either. Today's motion is more of the same from the Conservatives. They'd rather shout from the sidelines than deliver results.

The truth is that year after year, Liberal and Conservative governments put their own private interests first. The truth is that year after year, they take care of themselves, and they leave the people of this province behind. Speaker, the truth is that the Harris, Eves, McGuinty and now Wynne governments—their commitment to cutting taxes for their friends has left Ontario with at least \$15 billion less each year in revenue, and the people of this province have been left to pick up the tab.

Speaker, the truth is that after 10 years of neglect and 10 years of cuts, this old and tired Liberal government wants us now to believe that they're suddenly having a deathbed conversion, that they are now suddenly your subway champions.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, everyone was listening intently to the Conservative presentation, and now I've got six sidebars going with the Conservatives. I can't even hear the speaker. So can we keep it down, please?

Go ahead.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** Thank you, Speaker. I'll try to make it simple. What I'm saying is that the Conservatives and the Liberals act exactly in the same ways when it comes to transit planning in this province.

The Liberals want people in Ontario to believe that they've changed now and that suddenly they're finally ready to put people first. But the people of Ontario won't be fooled. People in this province know that there's only one political party in this House that will stand up and protect the public interest. History speaks for itself. Only the Ontario NDP has shown consistent support for public



investment, for transit operating and capital funding. While the Conservative and Liberal governments have downloaded transit operating costs to cities and riders, it's only the NDP that has promised to restore operating funding to our cities, to get vehicles back in service.

People are sick of more photo ops and ribbon cuttings. People can't wait another 10 or 20 years for their ride. People just want to get to work and to get home.

Only the NDP has committed to getting our city moving again immediately. Only the NDP has committed to funding transit and funding it in a way that is fair.

Again, Speaker, as we consider the motion before us, I think we need to recognize the history of transit in this province. It's been nearly 20 years since Mike Harris took power in 1995, cut transit operating funding and halted construction on the Eglinton subway.

It has been Conservatives and Liberals running things in Ontario ever since. While they've cut taxes in ways that benefit top income earners and corporations in this province, they have left the overwhelming majority of Ontarians with decaying public infrastructure and no money to pay for repairs or new public investments in transit.

Provincial and federal governments have abandoned our city of Toronto, and they've created a growing transit deficit. In 2010, former transportation minister Kathleen Wynne delayed \$4 billion in funding for Transit City, delaying the construction of light rail lines by five years or more. She cut 26 stations and reduced the length of new transit lines by 20 kilometres, to 55 kilometres. Speaker, I remember even the mayor of the city at that time was running ads saying, "Premier McGuinty, don't stab us in the back. Don't kill Transit City."

1620

In 2010, the Liberal government cancelled the bus replacement program, meaning that municipalities across Ontario can no longer afford to replace aging buses and passengers are forced to endure more breakdowns and waits. In 2011, the government signed an MOU with the city of Toronto that further reduced the length of light rail lines by 25 kilometres, cancelling funding for the Finch West LRT and proposing an unfunded Sheppard subway. In November 2012, the province and the city signed a new MOU for four LRT lines.

While the Liberal government has been reducing and delaying its transit expansion plans for Toronto, lack of provincial support for operating has caused cuts to current bus and streetcar service. In 2011, the TTC was forced to reduce service on 40 bus routes due to lack of operating funds.

This is something that could be addressed immediately. There's no big promise here; just pay to get buses on the road, get streetcars on the road and make sure that those are not sitting idly by while people are waiting to get home. We're now 20 years behind schedule.

Now even business-oriented groups like the Toronto board of trade have begun to advocate for public investment in transit. Even Conservatives and Liberals who sit at the heads of organizations like CivicAction have come

to realize that investment in public infrastructure is necessary and important. This is something that New Democrats have understood since the beginning. We're glad that you're catching up.

Folks like CivicAction are now advising Ontarians that it's now time to pay up for transit so that industry can profit, but the truth is that the majority of people have been paying while the elite of this province have pocketed the profits. While riders are paying more at the fare box even while services are being cut, corporations continue to receive tax breaks while their profits soar. As a province, we need to pay for public transit, and pay for it in ways that are fair to the broader public who have not prospered over the last 20 years.

It's the NDP that will continue to do our best to make this minority government continue to work at Queen's Park and to get results. Transit should not be about politics; we need members of this Legislature to actually make a commitment to a transit plan and get this province working, but we need a fair plan and a plan that works for the majority of Ontarians, not just the top 1%. That's why, in 2012, the NDP pushed for a new tax on the top 1%. We need the Liberals to make this tax permanent, but the Liberals want to give this money back. They want to give \$500 million back to the top earners in this province, and that's money that we could use for transit.

We've repeatedly asked this government to close corporate tax loopholes that cost provincial coffers between \$1.3 billion and \$1.6 billion each year. This is also vital revenue, and it could be used to help pay for the building of new transit and cycling infrastructure in cities like Toronto over the years to come, but the Liberals continue to say no.

The Liberal government wants to charge low- and moderate-income families in Scarborough and throughout the GTA up to \$1,000 more a year for transit while they let the richest corporations keep billions of dollars through corporate tax loopholes. Closing tax loopholes and keeping the high-income tax will help us to start to close the revenue gap. It will help us to start catching up on 20 years of neglect for public transit infrastructure.

The provincial government must commit to adopting additional revenue tools that are equitable and that meet the infrastructure needs of Ontario, because at the moment, Scarborough residents are facing rising transit fares, infrequent and overcrowded buses, and a lack of progress on rapid transit expansion.

The newest member of our Parliament was talking about his commitment to the mayor's agenda. Over the summer, I was in Scarborough, and I was trying to get home. I was knocking on doors and talking to the people of Scarborough about their interests. It was interesting, because while I waited for the bus on Kingston Road to get back to my riding of Davenport, the mayor pulled up in his Escalade. For somebody who loves subways so much—I wish that the mayor, the Conservatives and the Liberals in this Parliament would actually get on transit and try to get to Scarborough outside of their Escalades.

The gross inequity and imbalance that we see in this city when it comes to transit was the backdrop for the Liberal government's recent by-election promise to build a subway in Scarborough, and it's the backdrop for this motion here today by the Conservative Party: to make the Liberal government uphold their by-election promise. But the Tories have brought forward this motion today, Speaker, not because they care about commuters in Toronto or Scarborough, but because they care about Tim Hudak and the Conservative Party.

This motion will not do much to get our city moving, but it does ask the Liberals to keep the promise they made to Scarborough voters this summer. Scarborough needs transit, Scarborough deserves transit, and they don't deserve to be played as pawns by this Liberal government, because instead of working with the city of Toronto to deliver rapid transit for Scarborough, the Liberals have gone rogue. Instead of committing the funding that city councillors asked for, the Liberals chose a photo op for their minister over a transit plan for Scarborough, and they couldn't even be bothered to invite the chair of the TTC to their announcement.

Their plan is a plan that may not even be structurally sound or possible to deliver, and so Toronto city councillors will be left with an impossible decision come October. How are councillors expected to choose the best transit plan for the residents of Toronto and Scarborough when the government keeps changing what is on offer? Toronto city councillors have been left in a state of uncertainty, and transit building remains stuck in political gridlock here in Toronto.

We need to ensure that city council is able to make the best decision for Scarborough and for the rest of Toronto, and to do that, councillors need to know what is on the table. The Liberal government needs to work with city councillors and it needs to keep its promises if we want transit to improve in this city. That's why I'll be supporting this motion today.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Ms. Mitzie Hunter:** Thank you, Speaker, and thank you to those who have risen to speak today on this issue.

I was sent here by the people of Scarborough-Guildwood to deliver a subway extension to Scarborough. Working alongside Premier Wynne and my fellow Scarborough MPPs, there is a funded plan to do just that. The Ontario PC Party, meanwhile, has no plan and no clue where to start when it comes to transit. The last PC government filled in a subway line; the current Liberal government is completing a subway extension right now. The hypocrisy could not be more glaring.

I would like to talk more about our plan to build better transit for the people of Scarborough. The government of Ontario has stepped up to the plate and delivered \$1.4 billion to extend the Bloor-Danforth subway line to Scarborough City Centre. For me, Scarborough is a place where I have lived, learned and worked. My Scarborough colleagues and I have listened to our constituents, and this commitment delivers what they want; indeed, what

they urgently need. This subway plan is supported by both the chair of Metrolinx and the mayor of Toronto. The proposed alignment can be delivered within the funding we have available to us right now.

We need to get Scarborough moving now: no more delays that this motion proposes. A subway to Scarborough will make their commutes easier, helping them to get home—to work and back—much faster than before.

As I said, Metrolinx chair Rob Prichard is in support of the Ontario government's plan to extend the Bloor-Danforth subway line to Scarborough City Centre, following the existing Scarborough rapid transit alignment. Mr. Prichard has called the proposal "genuinely a good idea" and states that the alignment "has been the basis of every plan that has been contemplated." Mayor Rob Ford has also spoken in favour of our provincial government's subway plan, stating that the subway plan is a huge victory and that the city of Toronto and the province of Ontario are ready to build transit.

The Scarborough subway is a step in the right direction. On July 18, the government announced the \$1.4-billion commitment to building the Scarborough subway extension. The remaining \$400 million required to complete the initially proposed line was always contingent on funding from other levels of government, funding that has yet to be delivered. The federal government needs to come to the table for the people of Scarborough.

We, on the other hand, will not be responsible for any funding gaps. Our commitment of \$1.4 billion has not changed. The subway plan no longer relies on external funding from the city or the federal government. How much longer should the people of Scarborough be expected to wait for transit infrastructure? The Tories have no plan to pay for subways. The leader of the official opposition has said that he will build subways when funding becomes available.

The Hudak PCs would make the people of Scarborough wait decades until they have a subway. This is unacceptable. We need to get Scarborough moving.

**1630**

It's been noted in this House that after coming to power in 1995, the Ontario PC Party stopped public transit funding and physically filled in the Eglinton West subway line with dirt. The Eglinton line would exist today if the PCs hadn't spent almost \$150 million filling it in—lost jobs, lost opportunity and lost time for the people of Scarborough. The people of Scarborough cannot trust the Leader of the Opposition or the PCs to bring them this much-needed transit infrastructure.

The member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore's interest in a Scarborough subway is dubious at best, given his own record. During his time on city council, the member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore refused to make budgetary allowances for a Scarborough subway. Now he wants the province to put up even more money.

I have heard my constituents in Scarborough-Guildwood loud and clear. The members of Scarborough have also listened to their constituents. Scarborough needs a subway extension, and moving ahead with the funding



we have available to us right now will help avoid further inaction on this issue.

The people of Scarborough can no longer afford to wait. Therefore, I cannot support the motion put forward by the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

Whether the Ontario PC Party likes it or not, this government is building a subway to Scarborough. I'm proud to be a subway champion for Scarborough–Guildwood and, with my Scarborough colleagues, a subway funder.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I'm pleased to participate in this debate on a motion by my colleague from Etobicoke–Lakeshore. I just want to refocus our attention to the motion itself, and that is:

“That the Legislative Assembly calls upon the government

“To recognize that world-class cities build subways”—not partial subways, subways.

That was a commitment that this government had made during the course of the past by-election. Now the member elected by the people in Scarborough, who heard the commitment for subways, is standing in her place, and it hasn't taken her very long to become very political about this issue and to side with her government to try and convince her own constituents to settle for less than was promised. That's a typical Liberal approach to government.

Speaker, we were hosted by the Lieutenant Governor and it was an opportunity for us to get together as some MPPs. The Premier was there, as were members from all parties. Although we were sworn to secrecy, the topic of the discussion was: How do we raise the level of debate in this place so that we could actually get some work done? It's interesting, as I hear the debate here today, that there's a reason why people are cynical about what goes on in this place.

It's interesting, the member from Danforth stood in his place and read a very eloquent speech, and time and time again the member from Danforth urged us not to play politics with transit, and yet every other word that he said was, “It's only the NDP that can bring transit,” and every word between that was how bad the Liberals are and how bad the Conservatives are. So this non-partisan speech that we had from the member from Danforth had nothing in it but politics.

Then we hear from the newly elected member—welcome to the chamber; glad to have you here—a former leader in the CivicAction coalition. We now hear from this newly minted member rhetoric that is so partisan that I cannot believe that they actually were written by the member herself. I would urge you to do this: Tell the speech writers to cut it out. You can write your own speeches—

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Davenport.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I just want to correct the record. The member from Danforth is not here. I'm the member from Davenport, and it was me who said the Tories and Liberals have a terrible record when it comes to transit.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. Continue.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I would just urge the newly minted Liberal member to write her own speeches. Speak from the heart. That is what in fact will make things happen here.

Now, here's what we want to achieve with this motion. We simply would like the government to once, just once, keep a promise. The promise that was made before the by-election and through the by-election was that they would build a subway in Scarborough and that they would do it in co-operation with the city of Toronto and the TTC. That was the commitment. Now that the election is by, what happens within a matter of days? The Minister of Transportation calls a press conference and announces his own plan.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I just heard the member say that their plan is supported by the chair of the TTC.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Frank Klees:** The chair of Metrolinx, ah. Well, the chair of Metrolinx has obviously been brought into the minister's office and told to get in line, because Metrolinx's initial response was that they too were surprised by the announcement that was made.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Absolutely they were. That is exactly the case.

You see, Speaker, this is why we have problems here, because Metrolinx itself has now become a creature of the Ministry of Transportation rather than the body of planning that it should be, which is why we have—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like you to rule. I put on the record several times that Metrolinx actually briefed the city long before I made the announcement. I don't think the member intentionally means to mislead the House by stating things he knows not to be true.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Excuse me. The member from Renfrew might want to get in his seat.

Secondly, thank you for your point and it's well taken. However, if you have a problem, you know the rules. You can call for a late show if someone causes you a problem.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, there you go.

That's not a point of order.

Continue.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Thank you. Speaker, that is not a point of order. The minister knows full well that even Metrolinx was surprised by his announcement and that

the chair of the TTC is absolutely opposed to his imposed plan.

I would like to remind the Premier, I would like to remind the minister of a statement made by the Premier to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario just a few weeks ago. Here are her words to municipalities, and I assume that included the city of Toronto: "Decisions based on evidence, community input and collaboration are the best decisions."

The Premier went on to say, "Today I will talk most about collaboration because it is a challenge, but evidence and community input inform my decision-making. I have maintained my focus on finding collaborative solutions."

Well, Speaker, if that's the case, then why does this government, why does this Minister of Transportation, insist on imposing a subway solution on the city of Toronto, on the TTC, that they absolutely oppose? Where is the collaboration that the Premier has promised the people of this province and the municipalities of this province? We're here to say, "Yes, we need transit investment. Yes, we need a subway, but we need a subway that is committed to doing it right," as the member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore said. The last thing we need is to build more transit that creates more gridlock. If we're not going subways, that's exactly what we're going to do: spend billions of dollars to increase the gridlock. Speaker, we have to do it right. That's why we're bringing this proposal forward.

1640

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I will be supporting this motion; I wanted to say that. I will be giving a little bit of a history about what the government has done and what the city of Toronto has done, so as to get a sense of how paralyzed we have been for a long, long while. Then I was going to gently criticize the Conservatives, which I do from time to time—gently, because I know how sensitive, Speaker, through you, they are about those things. So I'll try to be as delicate as I can without trying to offend too much.

But after hearing the member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore, I wanted to reverse the order a little bit. I want to say that the motion speaks about spending a little more money on subways, and, to be fair to the Liberals, they said that they would spend \$1.4 billion on subways and \$300 million more to make repairs or adjustments to the Kennedy line. To be fair to them, I'm assuming that money would be coming, and I'm assuming the Tories are saying, "We're going to have to spend more because we're going to need to spend more"—and, by the way, they're likely right in that regard. I think the Minister of Transportation knows that. So that part is supportable, in my view, because clearly the minister is saying, "We're going to do subways." The question is how we do it. The Tories are saying, "Well, let's spend a little more," and I'm saying you're going to have to, one way or the other, spend a little more on this. It's a given.

The other thing is, in the motion they talk about working with the city of Toronto, and they're right. As I pointed out to the minister four times, you used to like consultations and having discussions, and all of a sudden you've decided—the Premier and the minister—to do this by fiat: no longer discussions or "conversations." So we don't hear that word anymore, and clearly the government has shifted away from "conversation" to actually being leaders, which is interesting and surprising. From one month to the next, you've changed the language, which is fascinating. It would seem to me that the Liberals would still like to have those conversations, but it appears that that is dead as an approach to issues.

And so the Tories have put in their motion, quite correctly, the idea of working with the city and the TTC. In my mind, with all the questions I asked the minister, that makes sense, because that's what I asked for four days. You've got to work with the city and you've got to work with the TTC, because that's where it all happens. That's where the knowledge is, although the minister is saying, "No, it's not there all of the time. It's elsewhere as well. It's in our ministry. We have the knowledge and we can do this alone."

I just wanted to make an argument about why I think the motion is okay and why I can support it. It's a mischievous motion, obviously; that's clear. They were trying, in the wedge politics, to see if they could get the NDP not to support this motion. I understand that. It's part of the game and I appreciate it. Liberals understand it as well. They were trying to wedge themselves with the Liberals somehow—and I don't know whether they're going to be supporting this or not. If they don't support it, it's brilliant; the Tories can go into Scarborough and say, "Liberals don't support it," although the Liberals can say, "Hold on a moment. We are, because we're announcing \$1.4 billion for subways." The Liberals will say, "We're the subway kings, not them, because we're the ones with the money and we're announcing \$1.4 billion." So they're ahead of the Tories, they can argue. But you understand the game. Do you see the game? It's brilliant. I see it so clearly and I understand why the motion is before us in the way that it is.

I listened to the member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore. He's an experienced politician, since 1982. It's not as if being an MPP is something that we have to treat him gently with—because you've been around and you know the political—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Don't get personal, Rosie.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** No, no, through you, Speaker—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Member from Renfrew, you've moved to four different chairs and now you've finally gone back home. You're even louder than you were in the other four chairs. We're getting down to the first warning soon.

**Interjection:** I can hear him really well.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you very much. I know you'd like to have an ongoing conver-



sation with the member from Trinity-Spadina, but that's not happening.

Continue.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Thank you, Speaker. Very kind.

I just couldn't help myself, as I listened to the member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore giving us a little bit of history on the subways. There's a line in the motion that says, "to recognize that world-class cities build subways."

It's beautiful. It's beautiful. And I agree, because I love subways. I do. Where it makes sense, we need to build them, and where it doesn't make sense, we need to build something else. But I love subways. This is why we in the Rae government thought building subways was a good idea.

And what happened? That's the question: What happened? Well, the member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore said—I've got a few quotes here—in an article on July 22: "There was simply no money to do it.... We had bad Rae days. Remember that? We had to lay people off, people had to take unpaid time off work because we couldn't balance the budget anywhere."

Then I listened to what he said in the House. He said we should have been building each and every year. Mike Harris was there; he cancelled the subway. We spent \$100 million to start the digging on Eglinton, and he cancelled it right away. But the member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore said we should have been building each and every year, suggesting that, no matter what the economic times, we should have been doing that.

I don't understand how he and the Conservatives can argue that we need to recognize that world-class cities build subways, but we couldn't do that in 1990 and we can do that now. And he says that we can now because, "Over a period of time, this will pay for itself and it sets the standard that we want and the people in Scarborough want it. The Ford administration and I are supportive of that and so is Tim Hudak."

So now we can build it because it will pay for itself over time, but in 1990 we couldn't build it because, presumably, it couldn't pay for itself over time. Do you follow the logic?

Here's the other logic: We have a \$12-billion deficit today. In 1994-95, it was 10 or 11 billion bucks—the same deficit. Although the Liberals have had it up to \$20 billion and the world didn't collapse, when the NDP was in power it was collapsing. Any day, the world was just about to collapse.

When the Tories came in, they faced a great economy. It started, in fact, in 1993-94. The deficit could have been destroyed, killed, in a matter of years, and there would still have been, I argue to the member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore, plenty of money to build that subway that would have gone along Eglinton to the airport.

By the way, Fergy Brown was a happy supporter of that subway plan. He was a good Tory—I don't know about a good Tory; he was a good Progressive Conservative Tory, a mayor. He liked the plan. He said, "Busting my buttons with pride" on the whole issue of subways.

But the other mayor, the one who's now here—the member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore—didn't like the idea. We just couldn't afford it, didn't have the money.

So the logic doesn't hold. If the motion says we recognize that world-class cities build subways, it is a thing we should be doing all of the time, and we started that in 1993-94. We were ready. We were digging. And if we were digging, we would have had a subway going to the airport in the west and going to Scarborough in the east, as part of the second part of that plan. It would have been an amazing subway across the city, and it would have been paid for with little investment from the province.

#### 1650

Because Harris decided not to build, he wasted \$100 million to fill that hole, but built the Sheppard subway because Mayor Mel Lastman—I was told by the member from Beaches-East York, because he wanted to speak to this. He was telling me the story around how all that happened and how Mel landed his hand on that button that eventually gave us subways to Sheppard. But the idea was to build an Eglinton subway and not a subway to Sheppard. Because of Mel Lastman or because of Charles Harnick, who was the Attorney General of his government at that time, we got a Sheppard line that has few people going in and out of that line, and we buried Eglinton. That would have been an amazing subway to have had from one part of the city to the other.

Where are these good Tories when you need them? Where are they when you need them, which is not now—but when we needed them, where were they? They weren't there. But the current leader of the Conservative Party was there at the time. He was there; he was part of the regime. Now to be fair to him, the Premiers make those decisions, not some new, young MPP, and Tim was—the current leader was a young man at the time; he had no power. I understand that. But he was a member of that government. I don't blame him; I blame his government, made up by the Premier, because generally it's the Premier that makes those decisions. Some ministers have some clout and some powers, but they generally don't do much unless they get the nod of the principal secretary and/or the Premier of the time.

Mike Harris was no leader on this issue, so when the current leader of the opposition party mentions a long history of Tories and what they built and mentions in the same breath, unbelievably, Mike Harris, you say, did he get that wrong? Did he possibly forget? Why would he throw in Harris when he did nothing except destroy subways? So I can't quite understand why he did that.

I wanted to spend a little time attacking the Conservative Party a little bit because I'm nervous about what they would do with subways. The member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore talks about priorities. What does that mean? Well, it means that they want subways and something else has got to go. So the question for the Tories is, in terms of the speakers that are just coming around in the next little round, what would your priorities be? Because in those priorities, you've got to drop something.

Would you drop a little bit of—would you drop health? Would you privatize a little more in the health care system, which is what you guys started, because you did it—imperceptibly, but you did it; incrementally and imperceptibly, but you did that.

Would you cut on education? Because you did that. Would you cut a little more there? Would you cut out on the social services, around which we have incredible deficits?

That's what "priorities" means to me, and I could be wrong, member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore. When you have a chance, you or the others might explain what that means, because I fear it means cuts elsewhere in order to get this subway. And when you talk that way, it frightens me. And it just doesn't frighten Marchese; it frightens a whole lot of people. It isn't just in the city of Toronto, but it is beyond.

I wanted to quote the Conservatives in this way. I wanted to remind people that Mike Harris and that regime were no friend of subways, and I wanted to contradict the basic premise of this motion, that says, recognizing that "world-class cities build subways"—because that's not their history. We've got to judge political parties on their history on these issues. If the history means anything, I don't know how much you are committed to subways.

It's a little reminder to all the good folks in Scarborough who might like the Conservatives when they talk about subways, because God forbid should they get in. Who knows what you're going to get? You'll be whacked for sure, but you won't know how. You won't know how.

So a little bit of that on that history, but I also wanted to talk a bit about the history of why we have problems around this issue. In 2008, the government introduced the Big Move; it's a \$50-billion Big Move idea. The idea is good. The Liberals have been in power since 2003 and we got little. But in 2008 they announced a big plan, a \$50-billion plan. They never told us how they're going to fund it—five years now; they haven't told us anything—and today they announced another panel to give us advice about how we're going to fund it, because we don't know yet.

The board of trade put out some ideas, of course, and Metrolinx put out some ideas, but we need another plan, with a good Liberal as its head, to give us some ideas about what else we could propose by way of doing this, so it delays it a little more. This is all about delays: inaction, delays, confusion and chaos. Chaos I will get to when I speak about the minister and his plan, because my argument is that when you decide to do this by fiat, as you've done, you've created confusion and chaos and, in my mind, delay. It's not intentional, but you will have created confusion, chaos and delays, and I want to speak to that.

So the Big Move plan 2008, \$50 billion—we don't have any clue how it's all going to be found. They've committed at least \$11.5 billion on this Big Move project, and even the money the government has com-

mitted has been delayed. As we remember, in 2010, the government delayed \$4 billion in funding for Transit City, which got the former mayor, Mr. Miller, so angry at this government, and he was very close to the Liberals, dare I say. He worked very closely with all of you, in fact, and when he heard of that delay, he just went nuts. He just couldn't believe that you would do that, and as the member from Davenport said, that's where the button sprang up against the Liberals and that cut, which was a delay, really. But we called it a cut at the time, and delaying is just as bad as a cut. So they did that. The delay of the construction caused the delay of construction of light rails by five years or more, cutting out 26 stations and reducing the length of new transit lines by 20 kilometres, to 55 kilometres.

In 2010, the Liberal government cancelled the bus replacement program, meaning that municipalities across Ontario can no longer afford to replace aging buses, and for Toronto it meant a loss of \$42 million, and it meant four painful, long years to replace buses that weren't working very well and made buses unreliable, obviously, throughout the whole city of Toronto. When we talk about that particular plan and any other plan, it means that people like the folks from Scarborough, the residents, face rising transit increases, face frequent and overcrowded buses and a lack of progress on rapid transportation expansion. That's what all these things mean.

In 2011, the government signed a memorandum of understanding with the city of Toronto that further reduced the length of the light rail lines by 25 kilometres, cancelling funding for the Finch West LRT and proposing an unfunded Sheppard subway. In November 2012, the province and the city signed a new memorandum of understanding for the four LRT lines: Eglinton, Scarborough, Finch West and Sheppard East. It was a serious contract that the government had with the city of Toronto, and that contract meant absolutely nothing once again, because in July 2013, Toronto council voted in favour of a Scarborough subway instead of the LRT from Kennedy station to Sheppard Avenue, dependent on the \$1.8 billion from the province and contributions from the federal government and the city.

The point of that little history is that so many deals get signed, and they get ripped apart and new deals are signed, and then the city of Toronto decides that they want a subway, after they had signed the contract for LRTs all over the city. They say, "We want a subway," and so you go back and forth. Decisions are made and decisions are changed, and what it means is a delay for rapid transit across the city that people desperately need. And then, on top of this, after the city says, "We want subways. By the way, we're going to check with the federal government to see if we're going to get the \$600 million," the province decides, through the minister, "We're going to do this alone. The feds have put not one nickel. The city doesn't want to put any money on the table. We're going to do this alone."



## 1700

Instead of waiting until the end of this month to find out what the feds would say about whether or not they're going to put up some money, he decides to do this alone. How do you do that? He says, "This is fully funded." It's not fully funded. We have already wasted \$85 million on the LRT—south; gone. There's going to be additional costs that the city will have to pick up if the province decides to go and do this alone. There will be incredible costs that the city of Toronto will not be able to afford.

You can't do this by fiat. You can't do this on your own. This causes greater confusion, greater chaos and more delay. We don't know what's going to happen. We don't know what the city's going to do. They have a legal contract. The province is saying, "It doesn't matter. We can do what we want. We're not going to wait for the federal government to participate." Do you understand?

Confusion, delays—and people need transit today. They don't need it 20 years, 40 years from now. But in the meantime, this little motion, we're going to support.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear: This is not complicated at all. First of all, this was not my plan. It was actually developed by Metrolinx with the Ministry of Transportation and the Ontario Growth Secretariat. There's something called the Big Move, which I think members would be—the line has not changed. We never asked for a line change. We didn't ask city council to go on a fishing expedition and come up with a \$3-billion plan with no money to pay for it.

There's something called Places to Grow, which I'm sure the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore says—it says the transportation hub and the centre of transportation investment should be where? The Scarborough Town Centre. Why? Because millions of dollars of engineering and planning work said it should be so. Why are we building along this alignment? Because that's the only value uplift where you can actually rezone and upzone an area to do it. That will create jobs. That will build the tax base. That will help us pay for transit. That's how it works.

There is nothing in Places to Grow or the Big Move or anything in any of the agreements—the member for Trinity–Spadina, that line has never moved. That line has never moved. When people accuse this government of shifting the lines or having a new plan every week, that is completely false. We have stuck to the same plan. The only people who haven't stuck to the plan are the city. They come up with a new plan all the time.

When we declared \$1.4 billion without qualifying how we would spend it, the chair of the TTC said, "It's dead on arrival." Certain mayors from around the GTHA and across the province said, "Give me that deal. I won't say it's dead on arrival." I had one mayor who said, "I'll match ya." The mayor of Kitchener–Waterloo—they're matching. The feds are matching there. Ottawa: Mayor Watson's matching one third, one third, one third.

Why are we paying 100% of the costs, Mr. Speaker? Because to the federal government and some of their friends at city hall, people in Scarborough are being treated like second-class citizens. Their provincial government is paying 100% of the costs because the feds won't and the city hasn't.

This administration—the TTC, my dear friend from Etobicoke–Lakeshore, has not put a penny in. You talk to the mayors who are laughing at you, because they're saying, "Why don't you pick up 100% of our costs?" Why don't we pay for 100% of transit in Ottawa, Kitchener, Thunder Bay and Windsor? Because we'd go broke. Why are we doing it? Because your party, when it sees a 416 area code, can't write a cheque. It can pass a motion. It can play politics. What do we mean by playing politics, Mr. Speaker? Their party opposite is playing politics. Playing politics is promising people you have no intention of fulfilling—you have no money.

Why do we have a 100% funded plan, Mr. Speaker? Why is our plan 100% funded? Because we're the only people not playing politics. As a matter of fact, let me quote the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore: "Well, the problem we had when we came into power as Conservatives is the NDP had promised \$3 billion worth of subway and there was no money to pay for it, so we cancelled the project." Now we have the same member wanting the \$3-billion project that his party won't put any money into. His Conservative friends that he's—"Aye, Captain"; "Aye, Whip"—won't put a penny; not a penny; not 10 cents.

I can't imagine, when I was mayor of Winnipeg, which you always make jokes about, ever going to a government without one third. My city council didn't even think about talking to the federal or provincial government without one third. Only our friends at the city of Toronto can actually think that you can negotiate with no money in your pocket. It's hysterically funny to every other mayor and council across Ontario.

But that is not going to deter us from standing up for the people of Scarborough and giving them the subway they want and deserve, because we're the only party not playing politics with this and we're the only party writing cheques.

Why was the poor city of Toronto not able to do this on its own? Because the party opposite downloaded health and social services. Again, when I was mayor of Winnipeg, Mayor Miller, Mayor Lastman and Mayor Chiarelli were dealing with the biggest downloading dump. It extinguished their capacity to pay for housing, to pay for transit. You destroyed municipal government, and you had the biggest downloading, when you sucked the life out of municipal governments—I saw it happen—while in Manitoba, they were uploading health and social services under Conservative and NDP governments. That was billions and billions of dollars of downloading that made it impossible.

You want Toronto to be a world-class city? Then stop downloading. You closed three hospitals in my constitu-

ency, and you took transit money away from kids on low income, so the dropout rate in Regent Park went there.

We are building a subway. Metrolinx and their engineering team say it's highly technically feasible. We are going to commit that money, and if the federal or municipal government come up with any money for the first time—because we've been waiting for six months and can't get a meeting with the federal government—we'll add another station.

But mark my words, Mr. Speaker: I have no fear; the federal Conservatives and the municipal Conservatives will do nothing but move silly motions like this, and the one thing they'll never do is write a cheque for the people of Scarborough. They'll continue to treat them like second-class citizens.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate? The member from Nipissing.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you very much, Speaker, for the opportunity to stand and address this motion brought forward today by the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore. The premise is simple, really: It's to get this government to keep their promise to the people of Scarborough.

But the implications are not to be understated. This is about making sure the proper infrastructure is in place to allow our province to grow and prosper again, and reducing gridlock in the GTA is one of those keys.

We've said over and over again, a long time before this government started counting votes in Scarborough this past summer: that world-class cities build subways. It's something this government hasn't believed and still doesn't believe today. If they did, they wouldn't be toying with the plan the people of Scarborough want and need to connect them properly to Toronto's city core.

We wouldn't need this motion if the government would simply honour the promise they made during the by-election campaign in July. They knew the cost of the subway plan going in, and knew that they had to step up to the table with \$1.8 billion. In typical Liberal fashion, they're now flip-flopping.

In fact, they've really given a brand new definition to the phrase "flip-flop." They flipped their position on transit during the by-election campaign, in a bid to buy votes in Scarborough, and now that the by-election is over, they throw a curveball at the residents there that can only be described as a complete flop.

Once the campaign was over, this government decided it was going to unilaterally change the rules of the game. The Minister of Transportation, with much bluster and pomposity, told residents of Scarborough they weren't getting what they were promised. It won't be \$1.8 billion; it will be \$1.4 billion. You'll get fewer stops, less service. In essence, you'll get a piecemeal solution that is no solution at all.

Remember what he said: "I'm in charge here."

This government simply can't be trusted. That's why we need this motion to pass in the House today. This government can't be trusted to keep its word on anything.

What is their default reaction when they misuse taxpayer dollars and get themselves in trouble? It's simple, Speaker. They raise your taxes. Ironically enough, through the Liberal gas plant scandal hearings, we uncovered a Ministry of Finance document that outlined almost 50 proposals for new or increased taxes and fees to hit Ontarians to pay for transit, but really it's to pay for their misdeeds. The money is there. Their character, self-discipline and respect for the Ontario taxpayer, however, are not. They misspent Ontario tax dollars, and their response is, "Let's hit them up for more." Forget that skyrocketing hydro bills—thanks, in part, to the gas plant scandal—are bleeding away what little is left of the disposable income of Ontario families. In fact, the first of these fee increases hits Ontarians at the start of this month, when the Liberals announced they were increasing driver's licence fees. It's only the beginning, folks. They've got more coming.

1710

I can tell you, Speaker, that in my riding of Nipissing I sent out a questionnaire and got 600 responses back against these tax increases that the Liberals are planning; 222 of them were hand-delivered to my office. It was unbelievable traffic that came in. That's how much northern Ontario is against the raising of taxes.

The mind-boggling thing is the audacity this government shows when it comes to expecting Ontario taxpayers to fund Liberal scandals and self-interest. A billion dollars for eHealth. What's the response? To make you pay more. A billion dollars for Ornge. What's their reaction? "Pay more." So far, \$585 million for gas plants in order to buy the 2011 election. Who's paying for that? Ontario taxpayers and—when you get your hydro bill next month, you'll know—Ontario ratepayers.

I wish I could stand here today and tell the residents of Scarborough that the Liberals haven't done this sort of thing before, but unfortunately we all know that I can't do that. In fact, there is a disgusting precedent from my own riding that I'd like to take a few minutes to share, that highlights that the Liberals will say and do anything to stay in power.

You see, back before the 2011 election, the Liberal government allowed a Quebec firm to come in and sweep up a refurbishment contract from Ontario Northland. The bids for the work were very, very close, but if the government had considered the net benefit to Ontario, the fact that there would be no further Ontario sales tax realized, Ontario Northland would have been the best option for Ontario taxpayers and not put the 109 jobs in jeopardy.

This was just the opening kickoff for the game of political football the Liberals have played with Ontario Northland over the past two-plus years. First, they announced a minor contract for Ontario Northland to try to soften the harsh criticism they received for not standing up for the north in the first place. Then, just before the election—stop me if you've heard this before—my Liberal predecessor announced a phony strategic alliance between the ONTC and Metrolinx in a bid to cynically



win votes. Fortunately, people across northern Ontario saw right through their ruse.

So what happened to the strategic alliance that the Liberals announced during the election campaign? Less than six months later, this Liberal government, under a Premier who signed a—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The minister has a point of order.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Although I can say I'm enjoying the remarks from the member from Nipissing, I just want to refer to standing order 23(b), which says:

"Directs his or her speech to matters other than,

"(i) the question under discussion; or

"(ii) a motion or amendment he or she intends to move; or

"(iii) a point of order."

Mr. Speaker, I'm looking for your guidance. He is talking about a variety of things not related to the subway for Scarborough.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Your point is taken, and I would suggest that the member try to stick to the agenda, please.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you, Speaker. I will continue to talk about—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You will stick to the agenda.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Oh, I promise you I will. I'm going to continue to talk about rail services in Scarborough. I promise I will say "Scarborough" every once in a while. You have my absolute word that you will see how it ties in with the fact that we simply can't trust what the Liberals are telling us, and the fact that we've seen this so close to home, especially to do with rail.

So I won't tell you, then, about the strategic alliance, that it went nowhere and it was a phony announcement. I'll have to skip over that. But you do know, Speaker, that Ontario Northland is now in the middle of a fire sale, not unlike the activity we're seeing at Metrolinx.

The most sinister thing about all of this, Speaker, is a freedom-of-information for Ontario Northland documents for the 10 months leading up to 2011 that turned up 700 pages. How many of those pages do you think the Liberal government released? Eleven. Eleven heavily redacted pages out of 700 were released. I have to ask you, Speaker, what were they hiding? Well, I can tell you what they were hiding. They were hiding the fact that they'd been planning to sell Ontario Northland while they publicly said they weren't. They said whatever they thought the voters in my riding might believe to buy their votes, and that's how it ties in to Scarborough's situation. They've said anything to the people of Scarborough, anything—

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The Minister of Rural Affairs.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I do appreciate my colleague from Nipissing's long, distinguished career in public life in

Nipissing, but I'm just asking that we do observe the rules of debate, particularly 23(b). I ask for your guidance on this matter.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you, Minister. To the speaker, I'd ask you to just wrap it back up into the motion that's in front of us.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you very much, Speaker. What I can say is that we cannot let the Scarborough subway be turned into the next political football for the Liberals. We cannot let that happen. That's why I'll be supporting this motion when it comes for a vote later today. We need to hold this government to account for the promises it makes and need to do that here in the House today.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** I just wanted to point out in this debate that I understand the motion that's being proposed today by the member from Etobicoke–Lake-shore. I remember when in 1981—I was a university student—the last station on the Bloor-Danforth line opened. It was the Kennedy Road station. I used to walk to that station back in 1981, and that was the last station that Scarborough ever saw. We have three stations in all of Scarborough—Victoria Park, Warden and Kennedy, and it stops there. Afterwards, people have to get off the subway, get onto an RT and go up northward to get to the Town Centre.

The station at Kennedy is extremely congested, and I think the whole point of the government's commitment now to the subway is to continue the subway past Kennedy, prevent the congestion that happens at Kennedy station, and bring the subway all the way to the Scarborough Town Centre.

It's a significant move. I think all people in Scarborough and all people in Toronto will realize how important it is and how much common sense this makes. From day one, since I got elected in 1988 as a city councillor, I always fought for a subway. My residents have supported a subway—the majority of them have supported a subway—to continue from Kennedy station all the way north to the Town Centre, where there's a significant amount of growth and a significant amount of development, and where there will be a significant amount of future growth. So it makes sense to continue the Bloor-Danforth line all the way to the Town Centre.

Don't forget, Kennedy station is also important because that's where the Eglinton cross-town LRT finishes. Kennedy station is going to be a pretty busy place. The last thing you want to do is have people getting off the Eglinton LRT or whatever and having to get on this other LRT and create a mess of a problem or congestion at Kennedy station.

So I support this government. I think this government has been pretty consistent. It wants to support the subway. The residents of Scarborough want the subway, and it's incumbent upon all of us here in this Legislature to support the subway going to the Town Centre in Scarborough and that the Eglinton cross-town also be built.

The rest of this is left up to the engineers. We can't say how things are going to be engineered and done properly, but at least we know—we have the commitment from the Premier herself—that we will get a subway, not an RT, going all the way to Scarborough Town Centre. I think it's very important. I fully support the government's proposal, and I do not support what the member is speaking about today. I think that we've got to get the subway going all the way up to the Scarborough Town Centre.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

1720

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm pleased to rise and join in the debate. Before I do speak for a few moments, as an eastern Ontarian and as someone who has a riding that abuts the city of Ottawa, I would like to, on behalf of the residents of Leeds–Grenville and my family, express our deepest sympathies and condolences to those who lost their lives today in Ottawa in that horrific OC Transpo bus/Via Rail train collision. Our hearts go out to those who have lost loved ones today.

I want to say a few words about our newest member of the Ontario PC caucus, Doug Holyday, the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore. As the municipal affairs and housing critic for our party, I found his speech very informative. I think his experience on this file really showed during his speech today. I know that we're going to give him a couple of moments at the very end of this debate to again put some comments on the record, because I believe quite strongly that what he said certainly changed my approach in the debate today, and I'm going to take a similar approach that he had and that the member from Newmarket–Aurora had when we talk about this issue.

Accountability, I think, in government and in politics, is something that is very important. I know that our constituents are very cynical on how we operate sometimes. So I think it's very important that if we're going to make a promise, as the government did during an election, that they make good on that promise and that they don't modify that promise within a month of being in office.

I appreciate the honesty and the experience that the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore has. I know he's a former mayor. I'm a former mayor, and in fact, in my service, I had all three political parties take the reins of this province and I had both the Liberals and the Conservatives federally take the reins during my nine years in office. So I think I speak with a little experience about how different political parties deal with municipal governments. He speaks as a partner, as someone who, over the years, was looking for someone to work together on making this happen. I don't think it's particularly constructive for the government to make one announcement during an election and then change their minds.

I do want to congratulate the member from Scarborough–Guildwood on her election. I read with interest some comments that Councillor Doug Ford made about her in the Toronto Sun, where he talked about her being

pro-LRT, being on the record with CivicAction as very pro-LRT, being hand-picked to be on the committee. I'm not going to use some of his words, because I can't say indirectly through a quote what I can't say directly in this House. But I think if people go back to that Toronto Sun story, they'll see Councillor Ford's comments and really understand where he was coming from when it comes to the member for Scarborough–Guildwood.

With that, I want to cut my remarks short today, because again, I believe the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore really knows the value of a dollar. Certainly his experience in municipal politics—you always know where you stand when it comes to Doug Holyday. He's a breath of fresh air to me, as a relatively new member, someone who's been in this House for about three and a half years, and I look forward to working with him on issues in this caucus.

So with that, Speaker, I just want to say that as the critic, I support the motion. I'm disturbed by some of the comments that the minister had made and some others have made about being partisan. We need to fix this issue and we need to work together as partners. I think MPP Holyday, speaking on behalf of the residents of Etobicoke–Lakeshore, is on the right track. Thank you for giving me this chance.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I'm delighted to rise today. I speak today on behalf of the community in which I've lived almost my entire life. I speak today on behalf of the people of Scarborough Centre, who I've had the privilege and the honour to represent for close to 20 years, at both the municipal and provincial levels. I speak today with one voice with my Scarborough colleagues here today, as we all passionately have fought for this subway to Scarborough.

Most importantly, I speak today as a Scarborough resident who has been fighting for a subway for our city centre for close to 20 years in office, but long before that. So I think I can say with some authority, on behalf of my colleagues here today, in unison with my colleagues here today—and I think I can say with authority, on behalf of the people of Scarborough, to all politicians, regardless of their political stripe, regardless of the level of government they happen to be at, to stop playing politics with this very crucial, important infrastructure project. This is one of the most important infrastructure projects that we're going to see in Scarborough, in Toronto, in the GTA and in Ontario. It's absolutely critical that we move forward with this, and I'm proud, as my colleagues on this side of the House are, that our Premier, Kathleen Wynne, has stepped up to build this subway to Scarborough City Centre with a \$1.4-billion investment. Scarborough residents have cause to celebrate. After 30 years of waiting, we're finally going to get our subway. That's great news for our community. That's great news for our city.

It's important that we do this, because Scarborough City Centre is one of the fastest-growing city centres in



Canada. It's important that we do this because one of the things that has hampered the growth and diminished the growth somewhat in the Scarborough City Centre is the fact that it didn't have a direct connection to the subway. So this is really important for Scarborough, and it's important for our economy in Ontario and certainly important for jobs in our community.

I want to thank all my colleagues here today from Scarborough for the recognition they have of how important this project is, but I also want to thank the local representatives, many of whom get this as well. I want to thank Deputy Mayor Norm Kelly, who is with us on this. I want to thank Councillor Michael Thompson, who is with us on this. I want to thank Councillor Glenn De Baeremacker, who is also fighting hard for this subway line in Scarborough. We're working together on this because we're the people who live there. We're the people who represent the people of Scarborough. We know this is critical, and we all ask all members from all parties—enough is enough. Look, if you're a subway supporter, support this subway. Let's work together to build it. If you have ideas as to how you can improve it, we're all ears. Bring a little money to the table and encourage the other parties to bring some money to the table. Our Conservative friends can go to the Prime Minister. He came to Toronto not too long ago, and he spoke out and said he prefers the subway routes, but he brought no money. He didn't open his wallet to provide us with some help to be able to get it built.

So far, we're on our own, and we're doing something pretty extraordinary. We're building the subway to the Scarborough City Centre on our own, but we welcome help from other levels of government, both municipally and federally, and we'll work with them if there are enhancements they want to see to the line. The minister was very, very clear about it. And, frankly, we want to work with the folks on the other side of this place as well. You know what? This isn't about us. This isn't about the next election. This isn't about the next mayoral election. This is about the people of Scarborough getting something that they deserve, something they have been fighting for, we have been fighting for, for close to 30 years. We deserve that respect.

I want to tell you, we were heavily offended today in question period when the Leader of the Opposition committed a slur against the people of Scarborough by calling Scarborough "Scarberia." That's a lack of respect. Now, he can make up for that by, number one, apologizing for that slur, and number two, he can make up for that by recognizing that his political interests are less important than the interests of the people of Scarborough.

Let's work together on this. Let's build this subway line. Let's get it done for the people we represent in Scarborough. God knows, 30 years of waiting is long enough. The people of Scarborough deserve this line, and this government is determined to build it. We'd like to have your help doing that, but we're going to build it with or without your help.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** I rise to speak on behalf of all the residents in Scarborough and especially those who live in my riding of Scarborough—Rouge River.

I read the motion. My good friend from Etobicoke—Lakeshore has been caught up by being a new member here, and I hope he'll realize that shortly. He basically says in his motion that this government voted against subways. I can tell you that I voted against that motion last year, because it was not a motion about subways; it was a political game to divide. Today, again, they've got another political motion to divide, and it's their own gamesmanship.

1730

I'm sorry to say that I will not fall for that gamesmanship. I've always been a supporter of subways; I've never wavered. In fact, my colleagues and I from Scarborough had a meeting before, a private meeting. We wrote the Premier of the day a letter that we all supported subways to Scarborough and were not in support of this Transit City LRT. I make that public today, because we did that.

But do you know what offended me today? The Leader of the Opposition standing up in this House and criticizing the members from Scarborough. He called us field mice. I want that leader to know that this field mouse has never been a field mouse in the way he sees it. I came here to represent my residents. I supported subways; I let the Premier know it. But I have a Premier who listens. I have a Premier who is accessible. I have a Premier I can discuss my concerns with. I do not have to write emails and leak them to the press.

The member from Newmarket—Aurora mentioned that we had a meeting with the Lieutenant Governor. The whole idea was to get to know each other, and to try to raise the debate and respect each other. Then, the Leader of the Opposition stands up today and recognizes the area I live in as "Scarberia." I've lived there for 37 years. I'm a new immigrant to this country. I am proud of Scarborough. I'm more proud that I got elected in Scarborough, and I'm even prouder that I got elected to this Legislature to represent Scarborough.

It's language like that and the smirk he had on his face that irritate me to no end. I very rarely stand up in this House and make comments like that, but that is a degrading comment, and I hope the Leader of the Opposition, who believes he should represent all of Ontario, will recognize the big mistake he made today, because the people of Scarborough are not going to take this very lightly.

I am so emotional about this that it's annoying. I could tell you the 25-year history of my political time about the Scarborough subway. The Scarborough subway was always meant to go to Scarborough Town Centre. Town Centre has a bus terminal, Town Centre has a GO Transit terminal, and if you do not take the subway to Town Centre, you will have to mothball all this infrastructure.

The Minister of Transportation is correct: Why would you build a Scarborough subway that goes to McCowan

Road when all the buses go to Town Centre, so the people who go to Town Centre have to walk to McCowan Road to get on the subway? That's real planning. I look across the aisle, and I'm sure that many of the members there have obviously never been to Scarborough, especially where the bus terminal is—especially where the SRT ends.

Do you know something that's more irritating? It was that party that gave Scarborough an SRT that has never worked properly from day one, and they have never stepped up to the plate to put in more money to fix it. This government is now going to fix it, and we are very proud of it, as people from Scarborough.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I am very proud to be the MPP for Pickering-Scarborough East. When I thought about running to be an MPP in this Legislature, one of the things—actually, the main reason I decided to run was because it was an opportunity to represent the community I was born and raised in.

I was born and raised in Scarborough. I do a lot of living in Pickering—a lot of people from Pickering do a lot of living in Scarborough—and it's just a huge honour to be able to represent a community that you're from. I know first-hand about the needs for better transit in Scarborough.

I also want to say that better transit in Scarborough is not just for Scarborough; better transit in Scarborough is for other regions. It's for Durham region; it's for York region. It is very important that we get on with it. And while people have different opinions about subways or LRTs, at the end of the day, I can tell you, everyone in my constituency in Scarborough East says we need to get on with it.

Our government has decided to get on with it. Our government has put the cheque on the table, Speaker, and that's what my residents are talking about. There may not be full consensus on the technology, but if there is a bias, I would say it's toward Scarborough—I've listened to people in town halls; I've listened to people in coffee chats. People like the technology of subways; they like the longevity of it.

It's not just for us today; it's for our children and our grandchildren. Subways are expensive to build, but they are what leading-class cities have. And that's what Scarborough deserves.

Speaker, I was just incredibly offended this morning by the leader of the PC Party when he disparaged Scarborough, calling it Scarberia. We all enjoy a laugh in the Legislature from time to time. That was no laugh. That was very disrespectful. And to call members from Scarborough field mice was also very disrespectful. I've never actually heard that kind of disrespectful language since I've been elected, and it's very disappointing. It's a dark day for me here in the Ontario Legislature.

Our government stepped up. We've put money on the table. We're getting on with it. If the federal government wants to put money on the table, as the Minister of

Transportation said, they can write a cheque; more stops can be built. If the city of Toronto wants to put more money on the table, that's great. It hasn't happened yet. We need to get on with it.

I support our government. I can't support this motion that has been brought forward by the PCs. And I'm deeply disappointed and offended by what was said today about the people of Scarborough and the MPPs who were elected by the people of Scarborough.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to be given an opportunity this afternoon to participate in the debate.

Let me begin my remarks about my greatest disappointment this morning: hearing the Leader of the Opposition criticizing the people of Scarborough. Let me be very, very clear. Not once but twice, the opposition leader used slur remarks about Scarborough; and also, let me be very, very clear, called the members for Scarborough field mice. I want to remind every member of this House that we represent a very diverse Ontario. I represent one Ontario, one Scarborough. To be called, to be named, field mice is totally disrespectful and, more importantly, derogatory. I want to know: Will the Leader of the Opposition be apologizing to the members for Scarborough?

We're here today to debate a very important issue to my riding of Scarborough-Agincourt but, more importantly, to all the residents of Scarborough. The new member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore brought before the House today the motion supporting subways and asking the government to be collaborating with city council. Let me remind the member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore that on July 17, 2013, when he was still deputy mayor, he voted with council in support of the Scarborough subway. Subsequently, the next day, on July 18, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, along with the members from Scarborough, all six of us—five of us, I should say—participated in an announcement of \$1.4 billion for the Scarborough subway. Listening to Scarborough and listening to Toronto council: This is where the minister, we, the Scarborough MPPs, along with the Premier and our government, are supporting the \$1.4-billion transit.

But more importantly, let me be very, very clear: The member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore, in his track record dating back when he was the mayor of Etobicoke—and I'm going to quote, Mr. Speaker, just to be on record. I'm quoting from back on July 23, 1995: "There is a time when we will want to see the subway go all the way to the airport," he said. "The money isn't available now but it will be built sometime down the road," he added."

I don't know when "sometime down the road" is, but the people of Scarborough and the people of Toronto and Toronto council, where the member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore came from, have supported a Scarborough subway. To criticize our government for not supporting Scarborough is untruthful.

1740

The other piece is—I also want to remind—



**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** That's one way to announce your arrival. Point of order.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** She just accused my colleague of being untruthful. I believe that under the standing orders, that is out of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Scarborough—Agincourt will withdraw the comment.

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I will withdraw—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. Continue.

**Ms. Soo Wong:** Let me remind everybody in the House that I totally agree with the member from Newmarket—Aurora's and the member from Leeds—Grenville's earlier statements saying that we need to be less partisan in our statements, but as I conclude my remarks, I want to remind every member of this House that we represent one Ontario, and one Ontario means diversity. The remark this morning from the opposition leader is disrespectful and derogatory to every resident and member of Scarborough.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** This is an amazing opportunity. This is so rich. The party that cancelled subways, starved public transit for nine years—if you look through Hansard, Mr. Speaker, for nine years—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Look through Hansard, Mr. Speaker, and you will see that the word “transit” was never mentioned by that party when they were in power. They never even mentioned the word “transit” in nine years. They starved GO. They starved the TTC. They cancelled not only the Eglinton subway whereby they ripped up Eglinton Avenue—for three years we had to dig the holes and move the sewer line. Then they came back, as soon as they got elected, and without any consultation Mike Harris made the order, “We’re cancelling subways. We can’t afford them.”

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Mike Colle:** What happened is, we told them, “Why don’t you at least mothball it, just in case in the future you may have a change of mind?” He says, “No, we’ll never build it.” They filled it in with cement so we couldn’t build it again. All that work that was done was wasted. The three years of digging was wasted because they cancelled the contracts. Talk about the gas plants. What was the cost of cancelling all those contracts? Then they cancelled not only the Eglinton line, but they cancelled the extension of the Bloor-Danforth line to Etobicoke, to Sherway. That was gone. That was cancelled. The extension of the University line was supposed to go up to York University—cancelled, dead.

Nine years and not one cent was there for transit. They let the transit system fall into disrepair. When the new government came, we had to give the city of Toronto hundreds of millions every year for a state of good repair, to fix the system they abandoned for nine years. We had

to buy new subway cars because they let the old subway cars fall into disrepair, because they would never mention the word “transit” ever. They had no interest. They had basically the same interest they had in everything else they did.

It’s kind of rich. Before you know it, these guys are going to say, “We’re the hospital builders.” They closed 30 hospitals. They’re going to say that they uploaded; they downloaded everything on municipalities. They’re going to talk about the fact that they’re the environmentalists; they cut environment by 70%. They’re going to say they’re the supporters of public education; they stripped public education. They are trying to reinvent history, but the people of Scarborough, the people of Toronto and the people of Ontario will not forget what they did for nine years where they decimated public services, and the most decimation came in public transit, where they wouldn’t even put it in a state of good repair. They basically walked away, and then they ended up building half a subway, but they stopped the Sheppard subway halfway. At the Bessarion subway station, they haven’t spotted a rider there in four years.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Mike Colle:** They cut it in half. It was supposed to go to Scarborough City Centre. They cut that subway in half. These guys—how can you believe them? Just look at their record. It’s shameful: a record of shame, a record of neglect, a record of cutting, a record of basically walking away from their responsibilities. Now they say they want to build subways?

I just want to finish by quoting George Costanza. You know George Costanza? Do you know what George Costanza said in a famous Seinfeld episode? He said, “It’s not a lie if you believe” the lie. That’s what George Costanza said.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Point of order.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Sit down, please. Take your seats, please.

Point of order: the member from Renfrew.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** As is very clear in the standing orders, you cannot say indirectly what you could not say directly. I would expect that the member from Eglinton—Lawrence would be asked to withdraw that comment.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order taken. It’s not a point of order.

Further debate?

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** Mr. Speaker, it never ceases to amaze me, but there are people here who want to rewrite history. I thought I’d heard it all, but the fact is that from 1984 to 1995 there was a Liberal coalition with the NDP, a Liberal government, and then an NDP government, and they spent so much money that the government was going bankrupt. Bob Rae had to instill Rae days—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Stop the clock. Are we all finished now? I hope so, because you won't like the result.

Continue.

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** They had to instill Rae days because the government couldn't pay its bills. Now, Rae days were very disruptive to a lot of people. A lot of families had their lives redirected as a result of that. I know that in the city of Etobicoke we had to retire people early, we had to make them take time off without pay, and that happened throughout the province.

That drastic step only happened because the government didn't have the money to pay its bills, let alone build three subways. So when Mike Harris came to power and the Conservatives came in 1995, one subway had been started, but they never had the money to finish it. They never had the money to do anything, but they agreed that they would find the money to build one subway, and then let Metro Toronto council decide which one that was going to be. I was on that council, and the council picked Sheppard, and so, to the point they could fund it, they built Sheppard.

As far as mothballing Eglinton, there was no way you could mothball it. It's a hole in the ground. If you didn't fill it in properly, people would have been falling in there, the road would have been collapsing; everything would have been going wrong down there, so they did the only thing that they could do with any reason at all.

I'm glad to see that the Liberals are now taking their transportation advice from the transportation expert from Winnipeg, but I am taking my advice from the TTC and the CEO of the TTC, who has more transit expertise than the whole Liberal cabinet and backbench combined. We were told by the TTC that building the route that they were recommending, that council supported, would add five million more riders to the system—five million.

These are Scarborough people. These are people that would be picked up on that route, that wouldn't be picked up on another route. Also, we were told that, by building that route, you would avoid having the shuttle buses because you could leave the existing LRT up until the subway was built. Instead of losing riders—who you would have lost if you had the shuttle buses, because it was so inconvenient some people wouldn't take it—you would actually have a net gain of five million riders by building that other route. If that doesn't make sense to you people over there, I don't know what will.

It's just unfortunate that you are so political with this. You should be doing what's best for the citizens of Scarborough and best for the citizens of Toronto, and that is building a line recommended by the TTC and Toronto council. To do any less is really unrealistic and irresponsible.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Mr. Holyday has moved opposition day number 1. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

I believe the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1751 to 1801.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Members, take your seats.

Mr. Holyday has moved opposition day number 1. All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Armstrong, Teresa J.  
Arnott, Ted  
Bailey, Robert  
Barrett, Toby  
Campbell, Sarah  
Chudleigh, Ted  
Clark, Steve  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Elliott, Christine  
Fedeli, Victor  
Hardeman, Ernie  
Harris, Michael  
Hatfield, Percy  
Hillier, Randy

Holyday, Douglas C.  
Hudak, Tim  
Jackson, Rod  
Jones, Sylvia  
Klees, Frank  
Leone, Rob  
MacLaren, Jack  
Marchese, Rosario  
McDonell, Jim  
McKenna, Jane  
McNaughton, Monte  
Miller, Norm  
Milligan, Rob E.  
Munro, Julia

Nicholls, Rick  
O'Toole, John  
Ouellette, Jerry J.  
Prue, Michael  
Schein, Jonah  
Scott, Laurie  
Shurman, Peter  
Smith, Todd  
Thompson, Lisa M.  
Walker, Bill  
Wilson, Jim  
Yakubski, John  
Yurek, Jeff

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Albanese, Laura  
Balkissoon, Bas  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bradley, James J.  
Cansfield, Donna H.  
Chan, Michael  
Chiarelli, Bob  
Colle, Mike  
Coteau, Michael  
Damerla, Dipika  
Del Duca, Steven  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic  
Dickson, Joe  
Duguid, Brad

Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Fraser, John  
Gerretsen, John  
Gravelle, Michael  
Hoskins, Eric  
Hunter, Mitzie  
Jaczek, Helena  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Kwinter, Monte  
Leal, Jeff  
MacCharles, Tracy  
Mangat, Amrit  
Matthews, Deborah  
Mauro, Bill  
McMeekin, Ted

McNeely, Phil  
Meilleur, Madeleine  
Milloy, John  
Moridi, Reza  
Murray, Glen R.  
Piruzza, Teresa  
Qaadri, Shafiq  
Sandals, Liz  
Sergio, Mario  
Sousa, Charles  
Wong, Soo  
Wynne, Kathleen O.  
Zimmer, David

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 41; the nays are 43.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I declare the motion lost.

*Motion negated.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It being 6 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned at 1805.*



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Simcoe–Burlington	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Holyday, Douglas C. (PC)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	York–Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakubski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones

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Rob Leone, Amrit Mangat  
Taras Natyshak, Rick Nicholls  
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Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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Catherine Fife, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Mitzie Hunter, Monte McNaughton  
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Teresa J. Armstrong, Steven Del Duca  
Bob Delaney, Frank Klees  
Jack MacLaren, Phil McNeely  
Rob E. Milligan, Shafiq Qadri  
Jonah Schein  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Bas Balkissoon, Steve Clark  
Grant Crack, Vic Dhillon  
Garfield Dunlop, Cindy Forster  
Lisa MacLeod, Amrit Mangat  
Michael Mantha  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

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Toby Barrett, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
France Gélinas, Helena Jaczek  
Bill Mauro, Phil McNeely  
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Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

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permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

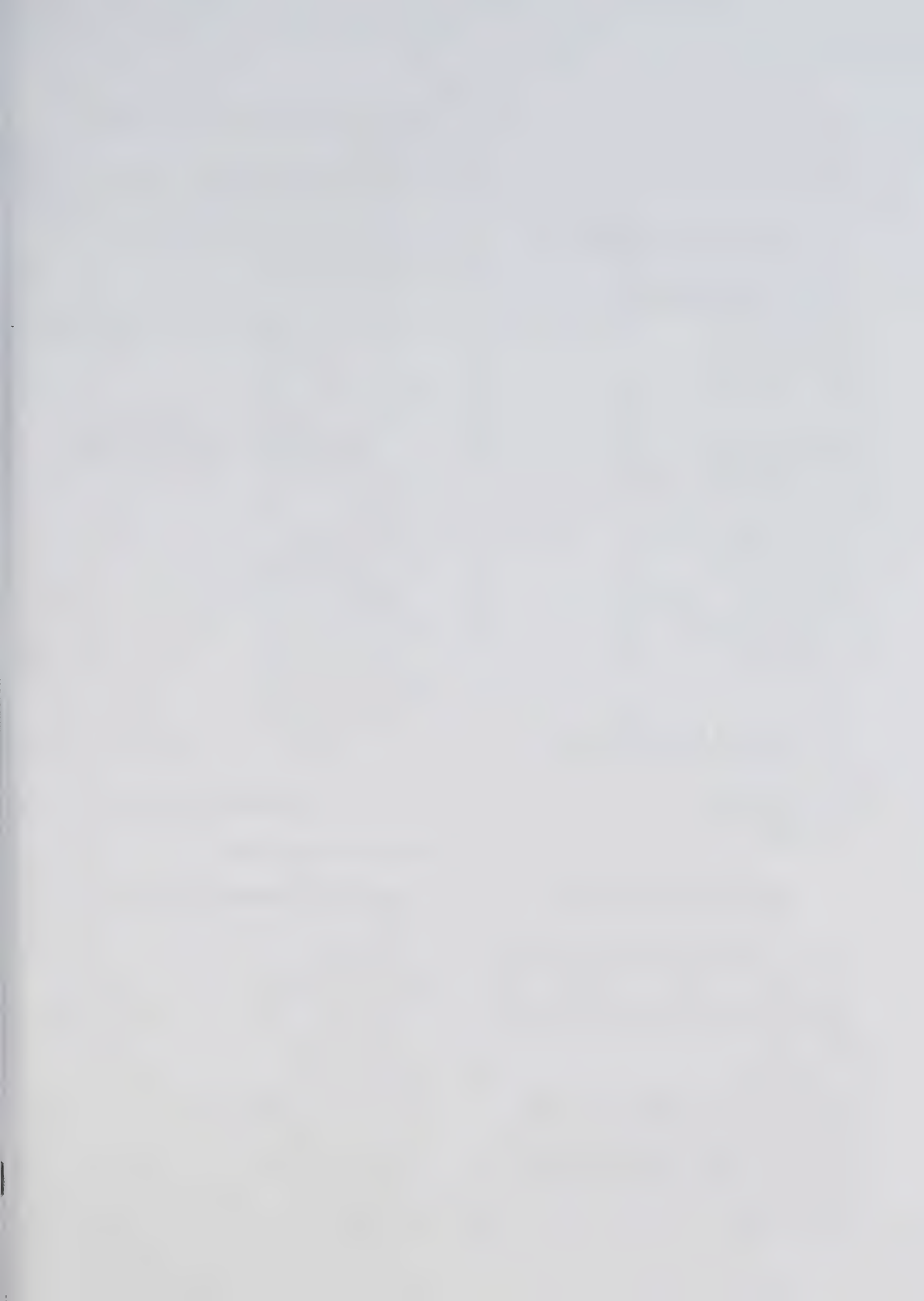
Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof  
Donna H. Cansfield, Dipika Damerla  
John Fraser, Randy Hillier  
Rod Jackson, Monte Kwinter  
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh  
Bas Balkissoon, Ted Chudleigh  
Mike Colle, Vic Dhillon  
Cheri DiNovo, Ernie Hardeman  
Helena Jaczek, Jane McKenna  
Paul Miller  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short









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of Ontario

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament



Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Thursday 19 September 2013

Jeudi 19 septembre 2013

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 19 September 2013

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 19 septembre 2013

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Orders of the day.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Good morning, Speaker, and good morning to everyone here in the Legislature and to those who may be watching today on television. The government is pleased to call government order G21.

### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS AMENDMENT ACT

(LEAVES TO HELP FAMILIES), 2013

LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT

LA LOI SUR LES NORMES D'EMPLOI  
(CONGÉS POUR AIDER LES FAMILLES)

Resuming the debate adjourned on September 18, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 21, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 in respect of family caregiver, critically ill child care and crime-related child death or disappearance leaves of absence / *Projet de loi 21, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2000 sur les normes d'emploi en ce qui concerne le congé familial pour les aidants naturels, le congé pour soins à un enfant gravement malade et le congé en cas de décès ou de disparition d'un enfant dans des circonstances criminelles.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further debate?

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I'm very pleased to have this opportunity this morning to speak, on behalf of our Progressive Conservative caucus as well as my constituents in Wellington-Halton Hills, on this Bill 21, which was introduced in the Ontario Legislature on March 5, 2013, by the Minister of Labour. The long title of the bill is An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 in respect of family caregiver, critically ill child care and crime-related child death or disappearance leaves of absence, and the short title of the bill, or how we've been referring to it here, is the family caregiver leave bill.

It's an amendment to the Employment Standards Act that would provide for unpaid leave from work for certain families and individuals as well—up to eight weeks of unpaid leave—if there's a sick child in the family, perhaps an elderly parent who needs care, or a spouse or sibling. The government has announced, in its

introduction of this bill, that this is intended to stand up for the principle that no one should have to worry about losing their job if they have a family member who is ill and in need of attention and care.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House have participated in the debate quite enthusiastically, and a number of our members have had the chance to speak to this bill. There are 107 members of provincial Parliament, and obviously, we all have this opportunity to respond to government legislation and bring forward our own ideas and suggestions. In this minority Parliament, our caucus is very enthusiastic about participating in debates on pieces of legislation. and this one is no different.

I recently had an opportunity to send a newsletter to my constituents, and I included in my newsletter a survey. I tend to do this, because I appreciate the feedback from my constituents.

A gentleman from Fergus responded to my survey just this week, and his comments were: "I wish you would stop being so negative and critical of this Liberal government. You were elected to represent us and to work with the government in solving our problems."

I want to respond to him in public. I haven't got permission to use his name, of course, but I do want to respond to him in public that, certainly, I do make an effort every single day to work with this government. I feel honoured and privileged to be here in this Legislature, and I reach across the aisle all the time on issues that matter to my constituents.

Certainly, this piece of legislation is another example, because our party intends to support it in principle. We agree that there need to be changes to the Employment Standards Act to ensure that families who have this sort of situation, where there's someone ill in the family who needs the care of other family members—people should be given the opportunity to take up to eight weeks of unpaid leave from work, so as to look after that loved one.

Our caucus has, of course, made a number of observations over the course of this bill. We are glad that the Liberals actually listened to our concerns last session and have made significant changes and improvements to this bill from the previous version of the family caregiver leave act that was introduced in this House some time ago. We're pleased that this legislation actually eliminates inconsistencies between the federal labour code and provincial labour laws, instead of creating inconsistencies.



I think it's important to point out a little more detail about the bill this morning, so that people who are listening to the debate and perhaps watching on TV can understand a little bit more about it. The bill proposes several amendments to the Employment Standards Act, to mimic similar changes that the federal government has made to the labour code of Canada and to introduce a proposed family caregiver leave for up to eight unpaid weeks per year.

To qualify for the leave, the employee must be caring for an individual whom a physician has deemed to have had a critical injury or illness and cannot care for themselves. The leave would mirror the family medical leave significantly, except that it will not include the provision of significant risk of death within a 26-week period.

It introduces a critically ill child care leave and unpaid job-protected leave for up to 37 weeks for parents caring for a critically ill child.

It introduces a crime-related child death or disappearance leave and unpaid job-protected leave of up to 104 weeks for an employee whose child dies, if it is probably the result of a crime, or up to 52 weeks for an employee whose child disappears, if it is probably the result of a crime.

As you'll recall, Mr. Speaker, this legislation was originally introduced as Bill 30, the Family Caregiver Leave Act, in the last session, and originally only contained provisions to introduce the family caregiver leave without any necessary consultation with stakeholders or demonstration that there was actually a demonstrated need for these changes. However, this legislation actually closes up inconsistencies between the Canada Labour Code and the Employment Standards Act, which our caucus maintains is a good thing.

In June 2013, the federal government started paying out benefits for the federal equivalent of the proposed critically ill child care leave. As of January 1, 2013, earlier this year, the federal government began providing grants lasting 35 weeks for the equivalent of the proposed crime-related child death or disappearance leave.

This provincial legislation, if passed by the Legislature, will incur no costs provincially; just protect the job from termination. I think that's an important point that has been made by our caucus: This is not something that will replace the income of the family caregiver who has to take time off from work. In fact, there is no cost to the government for this bill, but perhaps a cost for small business and business owners. Again, this is why this bill should go to committee for further discussion.

There are currently only two leaves available to workers in Ontario that are protected under the Employment Standards Act. Family medical leave is an unpaid job-protected leave of up to eight weeks in a 26-week period. To be eligible, a qualified health practitioner must issue a statement stating that the individual to be cared for has a serious medical condition with a significant risk of death occurring within a period of 26 weeks. Under the federal Employment Insurance Act, six weeks of employment

insurance benefits may be paid to EI-eligible employees for this leave.

The other one is personal emergency leave. Some employees have the right to take up to 10 days of unpaid job-protected leave each calendar year due to illness, injury and certain other emergencies and urgent matters. Only individuals who work for a company that regularly employs more than 50 employees are eligible for this leave.

**0910**

Again, I think the principle of this bill, that people should be given the opportunity to take a period of time away from work to care for family members who are ill, or if there has been an accident or if there's an elderly parent who requires that sort of family support—that their job should be held open for them, is a principle that our caucus supports. When this debate at second reading does conclude, we certainly intend to support it and send this bill to committee.

The committee process is very important as well with bills such as this, because there are other organizations and individuals who have an interest in this. Some will want it strengthened; others will want it clarified; others will want it improved in other ways. Certainly, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the organization that represents, I think, hundreds of thousands of businesses across Canada, may very well want to participate in a discussion on this issue because they represent small business owners and small business people generally. Of course, this bill will certainly have an impact on them, but I also think that every responsible small business owner who wants to retain employees would be very compassionate in these sorts of situations and in the vast majority of cases would be willing to provide assurance that a job will be maintained while an employee has to attend to a family matter such as this.

I think that process through the standing committee will ensure that this bill will be strengthened and improved, and those public hearings will be important. For those reasons, we want to continue this debate. I know there are other members of the House who will want to speak to this bill, certainly members of our caucus who want to stand up on behalf of their constituents as well, so as to ensure that their constituents' views are represented in this House.

We have an outstanding caucus, and it has been strengthened by the emergence of a new member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore, Doug Holyday, who has done an extraordinary job in just two weeks here. You heard him yesterday in question period. We're very pleased to have his participation in the House.

I also want to congratulate the other four members who have been elected in the by-elections on August 1. This is the second week we've been back, but I hadn't really had the opportunity to do that. Each of them, I'm sure, brings to this House the views of their constituents and their own beliefs, and they want to make a difference to make the province of Ontario a better place. We all

certainly wish them well as we embark upon the remaining days of this Parliament.

We look forward to the opportunity to continue to participate in debates and to bring forward our ideas, our concerns and our suggestions. But certainly, those of us in the opposition have an obligation and a responsibility—and I say this to my constituent who sent the survey back—to point out the flaws and the drawbacks of the government's legislation, because you can know one thing for sure: The government is not going to do it. In our system of parliamentary democracy, that's the role of the opposition and it's a role that that we cherish as an opposition party. Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. Questions and comments? The member for Essex.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, to members in the chamber. I wanted to thank my colleague the member for Wellington-Halton Hills for his submission this morning. I think he has reiterated some of the very scenarios that apply to this Bill 21, the family caregiver leave act.

As we've debated this bill for many hours in this chamber—maybe too many hours—I think we've heard submissions from a whole host of members in terms of how this level of support, or protection, rather, will benefit members of our communities. Therefore, I think it has broad support. When I spoke to the bill last week, as we resumed, I talked about the fact that my mother has travelled to British Columbia to give care to her sister, my Aunt Patti—I want to again say hi to Aunt Patti; I love you and we're all cheering for you—as Aunt Patti is going through radiation treatment and chemotherapy for cancer, and has just recently had a mastectomy.

I talked to Aunt Patti last week, and she was doing great; she was doing fantastic. I told her about this bill. I said, "We're debating a bill that kind of is the scenario that you're going through. It's a family member who is there to provide care for another family member." I said, "What do you think about that?" She said, "Taras, you can't believe the difference of care that it makes when a family member is there, rather than an outside support agency, someone who you don't have a connection with."

It just goes so much further in terms of the healing process and the fact that that patient, that family member who is undergoing treatment or stress or whatever the scenario is, can have that space to heal properly and get back to normal living. So the ramifications of this bill go far beyond simply protection under the law, under the Employment Standards Act. It goes to the fundamental aspects of society: caring for each other as a family.

I applaud the bill and I look forward to supporting it.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I appreciated the comments from the member from Wellington. He's always a very thoughtful member of this House, and it's true that he does have a lot of good relationships with all parties here. But he knows full well that we've got to get on to passing some

legislation—like this one—that needs to be passed for the good of the people of Ontario. There's no need to be filibustering all these bills, especially as these are bills that the members of the official opposition agree with. Yet they filibuster and filibuster and filibuster and delay and delay and delay and obfuscate. This is about helping people who are in a very vulnerable situation when they have to take care of their loved ones. So if we can't get on with passing one bill—but every bill is being filibustered.

The public housing bill, the co-op bill—poor Harvey Cooper. Poor Harvey has been here crying in the audience for—what?—a year. Poor Harvey has been on his knees begging to help the people with a minor change in the housing bill.

I would hope the good member from Wellington, who is, as I said, very thoughtful, would have some persuasion over the party elite there to get away from this nonsense and this obfuscation of delay, delay, delay, and help people who need this help at home, the caregiver support—and poor people like Harvey and all the people in co-op housing who are asking for one little change, yet it gets filibustered and filibustered. For the sake of Harvey, for the sake of people who need help at home and all the Harveys out there, please, let's get on and pass this very significant piece of legislation that may not be a huge one, but it is significant.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** I hope Harvey is watching this today. He has had his name mentioned quite a few times, and we all really appreciate all the efforts that Harvey has done.

I'd like to get up and reiterate what our statesman from Wellington-Halton Hills has said today. As legislators, we're constantly asked to consider the merits of legislation that is brought before us. We are expected to open it up and shine a light around the inner workings of each proposed bill. We are obligated ultimately to ask serious and thoughtful questions about the intent, language and mechanisms of this proposed legislation; to applaud the forward-looking aspects but also to point out the blind spots; to go over what has been included and what has been left out; and to discuss the bill in the larger context of what government does and how society operates.

I expect that this bill would benefit from public input at committee. I also hope that the government would, at the same time, give serious consideration to addressing shortcomings in the wider system that family caregivers rely on. If this government really wishes to demonstrate compassion and make it possible for every working man and woman in the province meet their commitments to family when a crisis occurs, they have to look at the larger dynamic.

As I've said before, what we're looking at is unpaid leave for a family member to fill in the blanks that exist in a system that is in considerable disrepair. Bill 21 is a good-hearted bill, but it seems to operate with only one



foot in reality. And reality is where the bill will succeed or fail.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** It is my honour today to stand up and to speak on this bill.

I have very good friends in Windsor; Steve and Madeline Cernak have been very active in the community for many years. They took this past summer off to look after Steve's elder sister. Steve's parents had passed away when he was relatively young, and the elder sister sort of became the mother in the family and looked after Steve, and over the summer Madeline and Steve put their jobs aside and went out and looked after her before she passed on.

**0920**

So this bill does mean a lot to me. I think of all my friends in the Royal Canadian Legion who are at that age now—they're in their 80s and 90s—and they're becoming more and more frail. They need the extra care and caregiving as well.

I had the honour, last weekend, with the Minister of Children and Youth Services, to lay a wreath at the Windsor Cenotaph. I'll be doing another wreath for the Legion tomorrow and another one on the weekend in the town of Tecumseh. Tomorrow is with branch 255 of the Royal Canadian Legion. But every time I hang out with my Legion buddies, I'm reminded of how frail they are and the extra care that they need.

I think neighbours looking after neighbours is part of this as well. I know in my neighbourhood in the Blue Heron area in Windsor, we have two friends, Paul and Rick, who mow the lawn, shovel the snow and help everybody out. Our neighbourhood association is very tight like that, looking after each other. In fact, last weekend, we had our annual celebration and they gave me a small stone with a blue heron on it to bring here to Queen's Park as a paperweight, and I value that very much.

When it comes to this bill, I fully support it and all the caregiving that we need in our communities.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Wellington—Halton Hills, you have two minutes.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I am very pleased to reply to the members who have offered comments. Thank you to the member for Burlington for her compliments, certainly; to the members from Essex and Windsor—Tecumseh, who sit with the New Democrats, thank you for your comments and your compassion and approach to this issue. I want to thank the member from Eglinton—Lawrence, the government member who responded, as well. I wish to respond to a couple of the core points that he made.

He suggested that our side was filibustering this bill. I would submit and suggest we are not filibustering this bill; we are in fact debating this bill. This is what it's all about in this Legislature. We have the opportunity, as elected members, to come in here and respond to the government's initiatives. Certainly, a huge number of our

members want to speak to these pieces of legislation and we have every right to do so.

I spoke for 10 minutes earlier. Maybe it seemed longer than 10 minutes to some who were listening, but in fact, it was 10 minutes. It's hardly a filibuster when it's a 10-minute speech.

The member for Eglinton—Lawrence suggested that we on this side of the House need to get on with it and allow the passage of some of these bills that have been debated extensively. I agree with that. In fact, I think that it would be great if we could get on some of these pieces of legislation and get them to committee where they can be given public hearings and then referred back again, which is the normal process here, nothing out of the ordinary.

I also think and suggest that the provincial government needs to bring forward legislation to deal with jobs and the economy and the deficit crisis that the province is facing. These are huge issues that are facing the province of Ontario. Our unemployment rate is at an unacceptably high rate, hovering around 8% in many regions in the province. The deficit this year is \$11.7 billion. I wonder if the government members are even aware of that in some cases. Do they pay attention to that? There's a huge cost overrun again this year. The provincial debt is going up \$20 billion this year, from \$253 billion to \$273 billion. The provincial debt has doubled under the tenure of this Liberal government.

These are important issues too, and we would call upon the government to introduce legislation to deal with those huge challenges facing the province, and we're prepared to debate those, too.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Oh, Mr. Speaker, nobody else wants to speak to this bill. That's disappointing. Bill 21 is an interesting bill in that it comes back to the House after it fell off the order table after the House prorogued for two or three months while the Liberals got their house in order—never mind the business of the province, never mind the unbelievable debt that we faced, never mind the record deficits that this government has run up, and never mind the 600,000 jobs that are facing the government. Never mind all those things; the government had to prorogue the House in order to get its house in order, and left bills like Bill 21 unattended.

However, they have returned. They have brought this bill back, the Employment Standards Amendment Act. They brought it back to the House, and it's much amended. It's changed from the bill that fell off the table during the proroguing of the House. It brings this bill much more in line with the Canada Labour Code, something that we harped on.

You have to talk a long time before this government begins to listen. They talk about us filibustering. We're not filibustering; we're talking a long time in order to get this government to listen, because they don't hear very well. They don't hear the people of Ontario, who are extremely concerned about the debt this government has run up. They're extremely concerned about the record

deficits, and they are even more concerned about the record number of jobs and jobless that are sitting idle in Ontario. That's what people want to talk about, and yet here we are talking about Bill 21.

The member for Eglinton—Lawrence talked about filibustering, which I totally disagree with. But let's suppose for a moment that we take Bill 21 and we pass it, and we pass four, five or six other bills that are sitting before the House and that have had some discussion before this House. If I look at the order paper, sitting on the order paper—what bills would we then discuss?

Would we discuss a bill to reduce the debt of Ontario? I can't see a bill that deals with the debt of Ontario on the order paper, Mr. Speaker. There's not one there to discuss.

Would we discuss a bill, let's say, to reduce the debt in Ontario and balance the budget? Is there a bill on the order paper that would help do that, Mr. Speaker? I can't find it. Perhaps the government could give me some assistance. I can't find a bill there to discuss.

Would there be a bill on the order paper that would help create jobs in Ontario? Isn't that the primary purpose of a government in Ontario, creating private sector jobs? Show me on the order paper: Where is the bill that we could discuss in front of this House that would help create jobs in Ontario? I can't find it here. I can't find it. It might be that there's a job here—that would create the Financial Accountability Officer, and that's going to create one job. It's going to create the officer's job, but it's not going to solve the 600,000 unemployed.

Bring in some legislation that is worthy of discussing, on the three main issues that Ontario faces today, and we'll see what happens to these other bills. You would like us to pass them, and then on faith—you say, "Oh, yes, we'll bring in some substantive legislation on the financial issues facing Ontario. Trust us; we'll do that."

Well, Mr. Speaker, of all the governments in Ontario—and I've known either Premiers or members of the Legislature of the governments of Ontario going back to 1943, the year I was born; my grandfather sat here, and I knew him. Going back to 1943, I cannot think of a government that is less trustworthy than this one. Until legislation comes before us, I think we—

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Point of order. The Minister of Consumer Services.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Speaker, I defer to you, but it sounds like we're far off the bill, and the language that's starting to be used is concerning. I'd just refer to the standing order that requires the member to speak to the bill at hand.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. Will the member continue? But I'd ask you to stay on the topic of the bill that's in front of us.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Speaker, the moment that I was interrupted, I had just had the words "Bill 21" come out of my mouth. I say to the member that I'll try to stay on topic, and I think I am on topic. I'm talking about Bill 21, but I'm talking about what Bill 21 is not. I know the

government doesn't want to hear what it's not; it would far sooner have me talk about how this bill is a far better bill than it was in the last session, prior to proroguing the House. Of course, it's almost impossible to mention proroguing the House without mentioning that it had to be done in order to choose a new leader. It had never been done before in Ontario's history. They had no faith in their old leader, and their new leader is a carbon copy—still not trustworthy; still can't take their word for anything that happens.

0930

Mr. Speaker, the member for Windsor talked about his experiences with his Legion friends and how their children quite often are called upon to look after them. I had that experience in Milton just this past summer, in August, where a good friend from the Legion fell down and broke her hip, and her three children are taking turns, rotating, looking after their mother and looking after their father, who is also getting to that age. I wouldn't want to tell him that he's frail, but to watch him move about, you know that he is somewhat frail. This bill will help that family cope through a difficult situation where somebody in their—well, I won't attach an age to her. I'll see her, probably, Saturday evening, and I wouldn't want to be faced with—

**Interjection:** The wrath.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** —the wrath. "Wrath" is a good word. But she has reached that age when she's not going to be completing any Terry Fox runs anymore, although I'm sure she would try to be there at the start line.

So yes, this bill has great merit, and it has much better merit than it had the last time it appeared before this House, and I'm glad the government listened to us. I think we had eight or nine hours of discussion on this bill prior to proroguing, and after eight or nine hours the government did begin to listen. So if I harp away on things like the deficit, the debt and jobs at every opportunity I get, even though I'm speaking to Bill 21 and what's not in it—and certainly, there's nothing in it to reduce the debt, there's nothing in it to balance the budget and there's nothing in it to create jobs. But if I harp away on those three items long enough and if we all do that, maybe it'll begin to sink in with this government as they wind their way towards the next budget of March.

You know, you bought off the NDP this time with about \$1 billion of promises that the NDP insisted on. I can tell you, next year's budget is going to be a little bit more expensive. So get ready for that.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** How do you know that?

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I know the NDP and I know the Liberals. It'll be interesting to see what happens next March.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I would ask the member to keep on topic, please.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** We'll see if Bill 21 brings the two parties together over the budget of next March to solve the problems of Ontario. I don't think Bill 21 is going to be the bill that brings this government and the



third party together. However, there will be something, and there will be much discussion on it. It will be interesting to see whether or not the government can actually survive the onslaught of the desires and wishes of the third party. Partnerships can be a very expensive business.

I would like to close, Mr. Speaker, by saying I'll be pleased to support Bill 21 when it comes to a vote. By the time it comes to a vote, I sincerely hope that there will be some substantive legislation in front of this House that will deal with the debt, the deficit and jobs in Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I always enjoy hearing the different views in debates. I really liked the presentation and the words that the member from Halton brought into the House.

On his theme in regard to what's not in this bill, there are a few things that are not in there that are of great concern to some of the people I represent in Algoma-Manitowlin, particularly farmers, who are losing thousands and thousands of dollars because of their battle with an elk population that is just destroying their fields. That's not in this bill either. The operating costs for small municipalities and their water treatment plants—this bill is not going to deal with that. And the small municipalities that are struggling with infrastructure dollars or a steady complement of infrastructure dollars—that's not in this bill either.

I do feel the frustration from the member from Halton, however. He has his perception as to what happened in the last round of budgets. I have a different perspective. We actually rolled up our sleeves and we went to work. We accomplished quite a few things in the last round of budgets, and austerity is not always the best measure—in order to cut things. You sometimes have to invest in the people of this province, and we also have to look at these individuals who are most in need and help them. Although I understand your frustration, it's not really factual as to what happened in the last round of negotiations with the budget.

What I do want to speak about is an individual who was very instrumental—who helped my aunt. I attended her funeral on Monday. This is what this bill could bring, and unfortunately, I've got 10 seconds left and I won't be able to bring it up. But I'm looking forward to making these comments in the next round so I can give you a really good perspective of how this bill could actually help an individual get a job.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Let me tell the member opposite what is in this bill. This bill is about a compassionate society, Speaker. This bill is about loved ones being able to look after their family members who may be elderly or a child who may be severely sick. This is what this bill is about, and that is why it is so important that we pass this bill.

It was back in February that I, as the Minister of Labour, introduced this bill. There has been now more than 11 hours of debate, which sounds like all parties agree, and it does not make sense as to why this bill is not in front of the committee. Just two days ago, I had the opportunity to meet with the Alzheimer Society of Ontario, and that's exactly the same question they asked of me. They said, "Why is this bill not at the committee? When can we come and present to this bill?" I urge all the members to not just listen to the government, but listen to the caregiver coalition as to why they want this bill to be past second reading and in front of the committee so that whatever necessary amendments need to be made could be made to this bill and be brought back for third reading—because it is about how we build a compassionate Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I'm pleased to be able to offer a couple of comments with regard to that given by the member for Halton. One of the things that the government finds itself doing is, on the one hand, justifying the importance of this bill and, on the other hand, saying we've had enough time to debate it when, in fact, the mechanics of this place are very simple. The government holds the key to what is going to be debated, so I think that it needs to be clarified for people to understand why this particular aspect keeps resurfacing and being tossed around in order to be able to justify what has happened in terms of the length of debate.

The other point that I would just like to make is that when the member for Halton spoke, he made reference to the fact that we as the opposition support this. We don't see that there's anything particularly egregious about the bill. I would suggest, and will later, that one of the problems that it represents is the smooth ability to actually bring it about. No one has talked about the kind of mechanics that will have to be created in order to make this a smooth transition for people to be able to take advantage of it. I think that is, perhaps, something that needs to be addressed.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

0940

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I'm very proud to stand up today, on behalf of my constituents in London West, to speak to Bill 21, the family caregiver leave act.

I listened carefully to the comments from the member from Halton and also to many of the comments that have been made in this place since I arrived here over two weeks ago. I've heard lots of personal stories from members who have spoken to this bill. I'm really pleased to hear that there is so much support from all sides of the House. Certainly, the NDP fully supports this bill and we want to do whatever we can to ensure that it's passed. However, we also have some concerns.

For example, I've heard from one of my constituents in London West who is struggling to care for her adult child with a serious mental illness. This legislation would

certainly help people like my constituent—when her son is facing a crisis, to take some unpaid leave to care for him, but she just can't afford to do that. She can't afford to take advantage of the provisions of this bill.

Another concern is that we need to make sure that employers are aware of the changes and that there are no reprisals for employees who take the leave. I worked at a small business in London West and was fortunate enough to have an understanding employer who enabled me to take leave to help care for my brother-in-law who was dying of cancer.

This bill will ensure that all employees have the ability to take leave to care for family members and don't have to rely on the goodwill of their employers. That's one of the key reasons that the NDP and I, myself, as the representative for London West, fully support this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member from Halton, you have two minutes for a response.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I'd like to thank the member for Algoma-Manitoulin. There is lots wrong with the world, and this bill will take a step, as the member points out, to fix some of those things that are wrong with the world, and that's why I'm supporting this bill. There are some huge things wrong with the province of Ontario. I say to the member, you can't spend yourself into prosperity. When you double the provincial debt and double the provincial budget over a period of nine years—this government is a spendthrift. There will never be enough money. Right now, they're out looking for new sources of revenue to build transit. Good heavens, if you can't trim a billion dollars out of the budget a year and use that money for transit—trimming a billion dollars out of that budget would be a piece of cake; \$10 billion would be easier. Anyway, you can't spend your way to prosperity, I say to the member. When you have some very difficult times, it's time to get on with that process.

I say to the Minister of Labour—he wants to move on. He wants to pass this legislation. He wants to get it to committee. All kinds of people would like to see that happen. I say, "What's next?" Bring us a piece of substantive legislation that talks to the debt of Ontario, that talks to the deficit of Ontario and that talks to the lack of jobs in Ontario. Bring us that substantive piece of legislation. It's government legislation. The government, as the member from York-Simcoe said, puts bills before the House. That's why they're called government bills. For heaven's sake, bring us substantive legislation that will make a difference to the people of Ontario; that will make a difference to the debt in Ontario, the deficit in Ontario and the jobs in Ontario. Bring us that piece of legislation that we can get our teeth into. For heaven's sake, get on with the business of governing.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I rise today, quite proud to debate this bill on the caregiver, critically ill child care and crime-related child death or disappearance leaves of absence. This being the former Bill 30 that died with pro-

rogation, I think it speaks to some important principles that we have in our society, where we try to protect people in their most desperate times.

I think that this brings it a little bit more home to me: I had a friend that went through this past summer looking after a child, who, in her early 20s, had a relapse of cancer. She took time off work—a new job, little security—to look after her child until she passed away this past June.

The mother lost her job because of the lack of legislation like this; it's unfortunate. The community rallied and helped raise some money to sustain her and her daughter Allie at home; through great sacrifice, tried to make some rearrangements to the house so that she could actually live there. But it was difficult: bills to pay, rents—something that we really don't want to have to go through and we don't like to see anybody we know or anybody in the community have to go through.

After all that sacrifice, after having to bury your family member and then go back and have to start looking for a job—makes it even that much harder in a time of your extreme need.

In our office, we tried to help, but really, in this government, there are no programs. There was so much red tape, so many conditions that were there, that really, it all timed out—and even after amassing a significant debt, there is no plan. You look at the health care costs that this person saved the government by keeping her home. This would have been a very extreme, expensive case in the hospital, but the wishes were to look after her at home.

I think, in looking at the costs of some program that would—this bill doesn't include that, but it would allow somebody to stay at home and save the overall system money but still allow people to look after loved ones. It probably would be something we'd like to see in this bill.

Job protection in this case would have been extremely helpful, as now they're forced to go back looking for a job, but still having to maintain your bills—rent and food—is extremely difficult. Unfortunately, as I said, in this case the mother lost her job.

We look back and this bill, in its current state, was brought up in March. I think some attention could have seen this bill go through. Certainly, former Bill 30 died—prorogation. You really wonder why that occurred. I guess it was a government desperate to stay in power—one of the tools in their box. The bill at that time died. Again, if some attention—if this government really cared, they would have pushed that bill through.

The legislation eliminates the inconsistencies between the federal labour code and the provincial labour laws, and we're happy they listened to some of the comments we made on the previous bill and took care of those issues, because we think it's important to reduce as much as possible the red tape and make some of the laws clearer. We saw that when we tried to go back to help this constituent of mine—very difficult, first of all, to go through. There was a lot of legislation we looked at; there's some potential there, but really, in the end there was no help.



Speaker, it's only right that we should be allowed to take some time off for a family member. I look forward to seeing this bill pass. But I believe there's always a fear that legislation gets misused. When you look at a study, it shows that 46% of the people working today can't afford to go even without one paycheque, so I don't think there's the opportunity that this bill would be misused. I think people will be very serious and very careful about taking time off and it will only be done in a time of extreme need.

I look at my own case. My mother is 95 years old and unable to live on her own, but we're able to keep her on the family farm. We have a large family, many of them living within just a couple of metres or a couple of minutes away from the family farm, so we don't have as big of an issue there. But again, that's unusual. In today's smaller families, that's not the case. People must take time off to help out and generally quit their jobs because they just don't have the numbers it would take to allow that time-sharing to happen.

I don't think there's a lack of compassion. It's just a lack of today's ability for families. Both parents are generally working and unable to take time off just to make ends meet because this province has become very expensive to live in. We see people coming in all the time, especially people in their senior years—they have a pension, it's a fixed income, and they're in trouble because they can't afford their hydro bill. They can't afford the taxes they pay. It has got so difficult to survive here.

0950

Another thing, times have gone by—and it relates to a story of something that happened in my area back in the 1930s, just to give you an example of how things used to be. There was an elderly stranger during the Depression—no place to live, no family, no relatives—and he stopped in at my grandparents' farm. He stayed there for over 20 years until he passed away. Maybe that wasn't all that common, but it wasn't that uncommon, where people of the community got together. In this case here, it was not a relative and not even someone from the area, but in those days, people used to jump on a train and try to look for a job. Times were desperate. Just a funny end to that story: When he died, I guess in the mid-1950s, my uncle was looking for his wedding suit. He had lost some weight and asked his wife, and his wife said, "Well, sorry, that suit got buried with Alex when he passed away," because he had no suit. Of course, that was just expected. They grabbed whatever was available. Anyway, poor Clarence lost his wedding suit.

But times are hard. When times are desperate, it's great to see some legislation. It's unfortunate to see that this—the member from Halton talked about what's on the order paper. This bill has been around. Sure, it's been around a long time. It has been debated, and I'm happy to have the opportunity to debate it.

I think that this government is trying to use this as an example of not co-operating to move legislation through, but I think that the opposite couldn't be further from the

truth. There has been co-operation with the House leaders. We could move this legislation through; we've been quite willing to meet. For some reason, I'm not sure what the issue was, but the government was unable to meet this summer to discuss some of this legislation and what we could move through. We have other legislation, non-partisan as well, that we're supporting. We're supporting this bill. We're supporting a number of their bills and looking to try to move this through because we really believe that there's no time to debate bills like this.

We should be moving on to bills that would actually reduce the cost of living in this province, bills that might attract business back—manufacturing jobs. But no, there's nothing there to actually discuss. There's nothing we see on the order paper that would actually do something to bring Ontario back to the way it used to be.

So yes, we're debating this bill. If we were to see something that really needed some debating and something that would attack the debt—I mean, we're looking at a debt here that's growing at \$1.2 million an hour. We don't see any bills that would actually cut that. I haven't seen any discussion.

We were at the plowing match earlier this week, and I think that all three leaders talked about energy in one form—windmills came up. But the government side did not talk about the real issue with energy, and that's the cost of energy and how it has doubled over the tenure that they've had in 10 years. It's unacceptable. That alone has driven away so many of our manufacturing jobs. We just have to get a plan, and we don't see a plan. We don't see any bills on the order paper that even suggest that there is a plan coming.

So we look forward to new legislation, and we look forward to getting some of these bills through because they are necessary. In this case here, I think everybody in the House would have some stories about somebody that they knew who really could use this legislation.

I want to thank you, Speaker, for an opportunity to discuss this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I want to thank—the comments that came from my colleague.

I do want to bring across that, affordability measures—we don't need to always wait for bills to do those things; however, they are a good avenue to do that.

There is an opportunity, when it comes time to having those discussions, at the budget area. When we're talking about affordability, which he alluded to in some of his comments, there's a lot of great things that were done through home care. There's a lot of good things that were done through car insurance affordability measures that we had proposed. They were tweaked, they were taken, they were considered, they were added. They're not exactly what we had wanted, but they're in there; they're in the budget. There are different mechanisms for us to accomplish a lot of our goals, not only through bills.

Je suis content que j'ai la chance de parler de ma tante. C'est seulement à cause qu'on passe à travers des

expériences personnelles qu'on a la chance de parler de comment ce projet de loi va avoir un effet sur la vie de quelqu'un.

Ma tante Muriel Mantha est décédée voilà la semaine passée. Je suis allé à ses funérailles. J'ai vu ma parenté, ce qui est tout le temps une belle affaire. C'est de valeur qu'on ne prend pas le temps de voir notre famille plus souvent pendant une année, puis on attend tout le temps soit un mariage ou des funérailles; c'est là où on se voit. Mais on devrait tout le temps prendre la chance de se donner une caresse ou bien de se donner un coup de main ou un petit bisou quand on est autour de notre famille, parce qu'on ne sait jamais quand ils vont être pris de nous autres.

Ma tante a pogné l'Alzheimer. C'était rendu dans ses années tard et puis ça l'a vraiment affectée physiquement. C'est son gendre Gord qui a pris soin d'elle, qui a pris l'initiative de prendre soin d'elle. C'est à cause qu'il a pris soin d'elle qu'il a été aperçu par une autre agence. L'autre agence a vu l'ouvrage et le soin qu'il a pris de ma tante et ils lui ont donné une chance et lui ont offert un emploi.

Il y en a des façons qu'on peut utiliser le « bill » que ça peut être productif pour nous créer un emploi aussi. Je voulais apporter cette avenue-là et cette perspective-là dans la discussion.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments? The Minister of Community—

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Consumer Services. Thank you, Speaker.

As people here know, as my constituents in Pickering-Scarborough East know, I'm very supportive of Bill 21, Leaves to Help Families, and I don't want to spend any more time talking about it. I think all the good points have been made.

The MPP for Halton—I don't know if he was really talking about the bill, but he was saying, “What else could we be talking about?” Well, there's a long list of bills that we could be talking about, everything from the Great Lakes act to the highway traffic statute act; of course, Bill 60—one of my favourites—the wireless services agreements that I introduced; that needs more debate, as does electronic personal health information protection; protection of public participation; the companies statute law amendment; waste reduction; and security for courts, electricity generating and nuclear facilities—there's a list of things we could talk about.

We have talked about Bill 21 for over 11 hours. I encourage all members of the House to support getting on with this. Let's get this to committee and let the committee work on it. Let's pass Bill 21, Leaves to Help Families, for Ontarians.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I listened intently to the member from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry. He made it very clear that we're supportive of the bill—also very clear that our democratic right here in the House is to speak. “Parliamentarian” means “parler”—that's the

French version for “to speak”—and I'm saying that they're intending or implying that they should deny each member the right to speak. That's simply not acceptable.

Now, if the House leaders were able to agree, under the gas inquiry going on, that there would be truth and reconciliation, then the House leaders could make some agreement. That's why for this bill and others, even though we support it, they won't play ball with the opposition. They won't work together moving forward—all this compassion and collusion stuff.

This bill itself has some really positive things in it. It's an improvement on Bill 30—the original one—but here's the real issue: Small business creates most of the jobs in Ontario and, indeed, in Canada today. The CFIB say that in all of their reports. But let's just apply this bill, which gives a number of days off to a person for family leave—which we agree with. It's a feel-good bill. It's been said by the NDP in almost every response on this bill.

What does that mean in real life? Let's say there's a mom and dad—possibly people that are new to Canada. Next door to me—that's what I'm thinking of—is a small restaurant. The mother, the father, their two children and two other people work there, and if one of them is home sick, they have to get someone else to work the cash register. They have to pay somebody to work the cash register.

1000

Here's the issue now: Yes, the person at home who had the job as a waitress or whatever, they've got the minimum wage going on now and they're not even getting the tips. So there's no money in this to help working people—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I too listened to the member from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry. Yes, it is a feel-good bill. We're talking about caregiving. We know that throughout Ontario, in every part of Ontario, there are people who give of their time generously, of their skill, of their effort to look after a loved one, to look after a neighbour, to look after a friend. To talk about caregiving makes all of us feel good, but our job as legislators is really to look at what this bill is going to change in our day-to-day lives. Well, the bill will give you the opportunity to leave work to look after a loved one. But it won't pay you to do that. You will have to take time off without pay.

The bigger problem that we face most of the time is that you're looking after a frail, elderly relative, friend, neighbour, and you need to take them to the doctor. Usually, you would ask your employer for half a day off or a full day off, depending on how slow the waiting time is in the physician's waiting room, but this is not in the bill. The one thing that people ask most of the time of their employers is not in the bill. In the bill, you have to take a full week off. Well, the opportunities where you need a full week off are a lot smaller than people looking after frail, elderly people that need to take a day off so that they can take them to a doctor's appointment. It's a



feel-good bill that comes with no money attached that will cost what the member was saying, that will cost small business something, but that won't be that useful.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry, you have two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Thank you, Speaker. I'd like to thank the members from Algoma-Manitoulin, the Minister of Consumer Affairs, the members from Durham and from Nickel Belt.

I just had the opportunity in talking with the member from Algoma-Manitoulin about what turned out in some ways to be a good-news story as the home care turned into a job, which is great news. Unfortunately, it's so rarely the case.

I think, as the member from Durham mentioned, the problem with this bill is that there's no money in it. In most cases, the issue is the job; that's, of course, a big part of it. It's trying to maintain your livelihood. Generally, there's no money to pay the rent and pay for food. Of course, people I know that have had to go through this in many cases have run up their credit cards and run up their debt. So getting back to work is a huge issue and, of course, a huge penalty to them. Overall, it saved a lot of work.

Also, the discussion from the member from Durham when he talked about this bill: There are many bills like this that we'd like to see get through, but we would like to see some co-operation from the government. As we say, we've had very few House leader meetings which would actually allow this to happen. Although on one hand they talk about holding up the Legislature, they're actually holding it up. We'd like to get some more important legislation. We've talked about that and our leaders talked about it many times—every day, actually—but we just don't see it. We don't know if it's time to wake this government up, and maybe it's too late. Maybe they're fast asleep and can't be woken up. It's time maybe to give them a shock, and that shock may be the needed election that would turn this province around.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I'm pleased to be able to add a few comments this morning on Bill 21.

One of the things that I think comes to mind for me first in looking at Bill 21 is yet another example of what others have coined as "gesture politics." "Gesture politics" means simply that it is something upon which there would be general agreement; no one would say, "Oh, it's a bad thing." But at the same time, it's something that looks at a fairly complex problem and offers a relatively benign and simple kind of response. When you look at it a little more closely, it looks good at a distance—for some, that's the purpose in life, by the way, Mr. Speaker, to look good at a distance.

If no one really looks at the notion, it certainly seems to be something upon which we could all agree. In the words of the Minister of Labour a few moments ago, this is a demonstration of us as a compassionate society.

Again, it falls into that realm of gesture politics. Who's going to say, "No, we're not"? We know that these are huge issues for individual families. When you start going beyond looking from a distance at this issue, when you start looking at the details, it's a different story.

One of the things is that with the details of this come a great many problems. One of them, for instance, is the fact that you're looking at up to eight weeks' unpaid leave. Well, for many, that's the end of the conversation. Being able to pay the bills, meet the mortgage and things like that are things that take up the resources of an individual. Obviously, they're already under huge emotional stress because of the circumstances of illness in the home, so the notion of then having this as "a gift" becomes in itself something that is beyond reach. That's a huge practical problem for anyone.

If we were to look at this bill in terms of how it would set out a regulatory environment, there are all kinds of details that beg to be answered. There is some question of the fact that you can only ask for a week off at a time when, in fact, for many caregivers, it's sporadic. It's a flexibility they need, in some cases actually on a daily basis. They're trying to juggle appointments, and they're trying to juggle the rest of the needs of the family.

Then you get into the whole regulatory framework under which this might operate, and the kinds of things that you get into: needing recourse if you don't quite fit into the criteria and the parameters that have been set. A lot of people would just find it, at a point when they are being overwhelmed in their own home, very difficult, then, to actually access this.

Whenever you talk about something, it's "We're making it available." Well, the question always should be, "Someone is paying; who is paying?" The question, then, is that you are not paid for the eight weeks, but obviously you have to pay the bills, and you have to be able to manage. There's the cost for the person who is going to get the benefit of the eight weeks, so there is a cost there for them—a huge cost.

But there is also a cost in terms of the employer. I think people sometimes think, "Well, those in larger workplaces would be absorbed more easily than in small." That's debatable. I'm not saying it's one or the other. I think it becomes quickly obvious in a small business. The member from Durham, a few moments ago, was talking about a family restaurant, for instance, and how do you fill in that gap?

There's no question that since most of the business in this province falls under the category of small business, if we're going to say that it's harder for small business, then it's harder for most businesses in the province, because that's who they are. For them to absorb the work of the individual and spread it around other people may or may not be possible. It may require out-of-pocket expense for the small business. Well, the same can be said in the context of larger business where somebody's pivotal role in production is now taken away. Who is going to be there and how much is it going to cost?

So, to look at this as simply something that is all going to be done gratis—this point means that the government, in this bill, is not writing a cheque for this process, but trust me, others are. I think that it will be very difficult for some to meet the requirements of this legislation without a significant financial burden.

When we look at this bill, as I say, to me it meets the test of being gesture politics. Of course, we have said that as an opposition party we would support the government in this, but I think that it's in the knowledge that there are going to be significant barriers, that it's not the panacea that we would all like it to be. I think it will bear investigation, if we look at the manner in which the bill rolls out and provides opportunity in the community. It would be prudent on the part of this government, at that point, to be looking at the real cost and the measures and the ability of people to actually take advantage of the offer that is provided in this piece of legislation.

To those who think we've talked about it long enough, as I said a few moments ago in my two-minute response, that's the responsibility of the government party. It's the government that sets the agenda on our manner and on the pieces of legislation that we're going to debate, and so it is their choice in how long is set aside. It also speaks to a different part of a political agenda, which is simply that it is our responsibility as elected members to have the freedom to be able to debate as we feel compelled or moved to do so. That is part of the process.

Since I see that the clock has moved along since I began, I would just want to give the Speaker the opportunity to rise and make a decision for us. Thank you.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** This House stands recessed until 10:30 a.m.

*The House recessed from 1014 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I'm very pleased to welcome friends and family members from the Dundas Living Centre. They're here today to observe question period proceedings. Welcome.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** It's my great honour to welcome a very good friend of mine who is visiting Queen's Park—a total surprise to me—in the public gallery and a constituent of mine as well, Mr. Andrew Cardozo. Andrew, welcome to Queen's Park. It's good to see you.

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I'd like to welcome Marilyn Savage, who is here today with us in the gallery. She's here once again on behalf of her 93-year-old parents, Everett and Simone Price, who are constituents of mine in London West.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** It gives me great pleasure to welcome Kathleen Garner to the Legislature. She's a Toronto District School Board superintendent of education, who I had the pleasure of working with for eight years. I'd like to welcome her to the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** It's my pleasure to introduce and welcome Daniel and Florian Lippold, from Germany, visiting Toronto.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure once again to welcome the grandmother of our page Ian Chapelle from Prince Edward-Hastings. Gloria Lanthier is back for a second day. Also, his mom, Deanna, is here as well. Welcome to the Legislature.

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to rise today to recognize some of the visitors in the east gallery: Bob Garner, who is also a former superintendent with the old Toronto Board of Education and now a citizenship judge; Kathleen Garner, who my colleague the Minister of Citizenship talked about; as well as Pat Meighan. They are parents and grandparents of page captain Sean Garner.

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** I'm proud to welcome an amazing constituent of mine, 12-year-old Sarah Lewis, and her mother, Jody, today. Sarah is the recipient of the We to Me award for her amazing work with the Street Help homeless agency. At the age of six she began collecting socks for homeless people and has since expanded her efforts to raise awareness for the drop-in centre. Sarah is a terrific example of young people improving their community, and I'm so thrilled that she's here with us today.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's my pleasure to welcome my good friend, oldest and best friend, Kendal Beckett, to the House, on his first time visiting Queen's Park today.

**Mr. Harinder S. Takhar:** I'm really pleased to introduce Sikander Singh Maluka. He's currently the Minister for Education and Higher Education and Languages in the present government of India. He's also the president of the Punjab Kabaddi Association and chairman of the All India Circle Style Kabaddi and vice-president of the Punjab Olympic Association. Joining him today are Charanjit S. Behniwal, the son of the minister; Harprit Singh; Sukhbir Sidhu, an outstanding radio host; Gurmit Singh; and also Kuldip Deepak.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome. Further introductions?

On behalf of the Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment, for page Sean Garner: his mother, Kathleen Garner; his father, Bob Garner; his brother Adam Garner and grandmother Pat Meighan are here in the gallery to observe and support Sean. Welcome.

## MEMBERS' PHOTO

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I just want to take a short moment to address all of our female members. By now, you will have received a letter from the Clerk inviting you for a group photograph to be taken of all currently serving women parliamentarians. The photograph will be taken on the steps outside of the legislative chambers on Tuesday, September 24, 2013—

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** What about the guys? What's going on here?

*Interjections.*



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Holy—immediately following question period on Tuesday, September 24. It'll only take a few minutes. Would you please schedule this time in your calendar.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** This is our moment. Keep quiet.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** If the men feel put on, I will arrange a photograph for you, too.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You want the evidence eliminated? Is that what you're talking about?

It is now time for question period.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. We're joined today, as my colleague and deputy leader, Christine Elliott, pointed out, by families representing the Dundas Living Centre—quiet heroes fighting for children with developmental disabilities.

We met earlier with Matthew and his folks, Martha and George Fox. Matthew has a developmental disability. He is a Special Olympian. He is an active volunteer in his community. He is a champion of the McMaster Marauders basketball team and works at McMaster University. We should all applaud Matthew's work in the community.

The challenge is, his family has asked for help with supportive housing. We have a motion on the floor of the Legislature for a select committee in the name of Christine Elliott. Minister, will you support that motion today and move forward on this important cause?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I'm pleased to respond to the question—a leadoff question. That's great. That shows the importance of the issue that the Leader of the Opposition and his member from Whitby—Oshawa have brought to this.

Speaker, we all have a common goal when it comes to developmental services. I was proud to support the member opposite's motion for a select committee. She knows that. I applauded her at the time, and I continue to applaud her for that and will look forward actually to working on a select committee.

I just want to say that the member opposite and the leader know that the member opposite and I—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I know the minister would agree with this statement: that one of the great accomplish-

ments of the latter half of the last century was the de-institutionalization of individuals, to see them not only as our family members, our neighbours, our co-workers—side by side as volunteers.

One of the great measures of the strength of a society is how they treat their most vulnerable, and I worry, Minister, as we stand now 13 years into the new century, that many areas are failing that test. It gives me, my colleagues and, I know, colleagues opposite, great concern when we hear about people being reinstitutionalized—those with developmental disabilities, who risk losing their friends, their co-workers; losing their jobs and being put into long-term-care homes. One of the significant reasons for the select committee to investigate and to act in the name of Ms. Elliott is to address that situation.

Minister, will we have your support to actually get that select committee going, hit the pavement and bring solutions to these families who are in desperate need?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** Absolutely. The member opposite had my support when she introduced her motion. I look forward to working with the select committee.

But I want to remind the House that the member from—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Well, you've got to appoint the select committee first.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** Yes, you do. The member from Whitby—Oshawa and I can stand in the House and be as supportive as we want, but we don't create the select committee. We don't put the venue in place.

1040

**Interjection:** It's the House leaders.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** It's the House leaders that do that, so—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Oh, poppycock, and you know it.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I'm not party, by definition, to those discussions, but I have certainly—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** If you want the committee, the committee will be struck.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew will come to order.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I have certainly supported this select committee and have spoken to my House leader about it. So any further specific question would have to be to the Minister of Government Services and—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Let me tell you another story we heard today from the folks at the Dundas Living Centre, a story about Margot and her daughter Sheila. All of us who raise children know that there are always challenges in raising a kid, and additional challenges and burdens are placed on a family with children with developmental disabilities. We do it out of love, and we do it out of compassion. But imagine being Margot, who is legally blind and 82 years of age; her daughter Sheila is now 42.

The day-to-day struggle of simply helping Sheila have a bath and get out of the tub, for an 82-year-old woman, who I believe is a widow—surely it is time to act.

Surely it's not a time to play legislative games. Surely it's time to move forward with a select committee to bring the best and the brightest before all parties to actually move forward and give the kind of relief to Sheila and Margot that they deserve as Ontarians. Wouldn't you agree?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I'll pass this to the Minister of Government Services and our government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** As a former Minister of Community and Social Services myself, I certainly share the concern of the members opposite. I'm also very proud of our government's record; our most recent budget had \$42.5 million more in funding for this sector, and as I say, as minister, I worked very closely with it.

I know the honourable member wouldn't want to re-write history on this. The idea of having a select committee is something that is achieved through a consensus amongst all three parties, and those of us remember that last June, there was a series of meetings between House leaders where we talked about a potential summer schedule, and there was no consensus on how to move forward. We're now at the start of a new session, and there will be opportunities for the House leaders to meet and put this on the agenda.

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** My question is also to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Minister, on two occasions, most recently in May of this year, this House has unanimously voted in favour of a select committee to develop a comprehensive strategy for developmental services. To date, however, the committee has not been struck, despite the fact that the motion that was adopted by this House would have had an interim report prepared by October 31 of this year.

Minister, will you commit today to striking the select committee immediately so it can begin its work right now?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** Let me just also join the members opposite in welcoming our friends from Dundas. They are indeed the quiet heroes, as the Leader of the Opposition has indicated.

Listen: I support the creation of a select committee. The government House leader just indicated that there have been some discussions about that, so I support that—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Yakubski:** Don't hide behind procedure.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm going to make a comment to ask you just to please listen to the answer. It's a reasonable policy question, and I think it deserves attention without the yelling. Please.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I don't know how other members of the House spent their summer, but I invested my

summer in a six-week intensive tour around the province—the entire province—talking to 173 different groups, many of them from the developmental services area. So I know the angst, and I support the member opposite in her call for a select committee. I hope the House leaders get it sorted out.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** Well, supporting the call for a select committee—and calling for the committee to be established and commencing its work is quite another issue.

The minister will know from his tour that the need in this sector is urgent and growing rapidly. There are over 15,000 people in this province right now who are waiting for appropriate housing. Their parents are frightened and desperate. They have no idea what's going to happen to their children when they're gone.

The people who are here from the Dundas Living Centre today and thousands of parents and other groups across this province are depending on us, as legislators, to help them. Will you commit today to strike the committee immediately so it can begin its important work?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** Mr. Speaker, I think I've answered that question a couple of times already.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, come to order. The member from Dufferin–Caledon, come to order.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** This year, we are investing, as a government, more than \$1.7 billion in developmental services, and the previous budget allocated an additional \$43 million to help with some of the housing issues. The increase in funding to this area since we came to government is some 68%. We understand that there are some challenges, and I will fulfill my role as best I can to continue to be an advocate. That is going to require some budgetary adjustments, which I'm fully in favour of. I hope when we get to that point where we have a budget figure, that those opposite will stand in their place and vote for it. They didn't the last time we increased the funding—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** The minister and the members of this government cannot continue to hide behind this charade of this being a House leaders' issue. They have the ability to strike this committee, and they should do the right thing. In the end, this is a matter of priorities. We have an obligation to take care of our most vulnerable citizens.

People like Matthew and thousands of other young people across this province have the right to live in safe, clean homes. Their parents have the right to know that their child is going to be cared for and valued when they're not here anymore. If we can't do that basic work



on behalf of the people of Ontario, then I think we all have to ask ourselves, why are we even here?

Minister, will you do the right thing and agree to strike the—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock.

Be seated, please. Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Halton, that does not help. Please, everyone, race to the top.

Minister?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I don't disagree with anything the member from Whitchy-Oshawa said. I think we do have to get on with it.

I'd like to share a quote from Chris Beesley, the CEO of Community Living Ontario, who sent this to me recently: "We have spent many years advocating for an inclusive society—a world where all people are valued and included in all aspects of community life. We actively supported the plan to close institutions"—the Leader of the Opposition referenced that—"and communities across the province celebrated when this occurred."

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, second time.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** "Congregate, isolated living should not be an option any longer—although we certainly understand and appreciate"—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Stormont can hide his mouth all he wants, but he's still too loud.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:**—"why some are desperately seeking" solutions "for their family members."

Speaker, I'll continue to work on this. I know clearly that the members opposite will, and hopefully together we can move it forward.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Acting Premier. Since the House resumed, we've been pushing the government hard to deliver results for Ontario families that deserve good jobs, better health care and affordability in their daily lives. Yesterday, the Premier launched yet another study into new, unfair fees. How many more conversations does this government plan to have about this topic?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Yesterday in this Legislature, we had a very good debate on public transit, and there appears to be a little bit of a gap between that side and this side. We all want public transit, Mr. Speaker. We all recognize the connection between gridlock, the economy and the need for investment, but only one party in this Legislature right now is anteing up to pay for the very important infrastructure that we need to build. So I say to the leader of the third party: We're all for your support

for public transit. Mind you, when it gets down to the nitty-gritty, the NDP have been against just about every public transit project we've brought forward in the last 10 years. We're looking forward to your support for public transit, but you've got to be straight with the people of Ontario and tell them how you're going to fund it.

1050

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** What everybody recognizes—and the Liberals have made it quite clear that they think Ontario families should have to pay up to \$1,000 more a year in new taxes and tolls, while at the same time they're opening new corporate tax loopholes that will cost families billions and billions of dollars.

Is this government's new panel about information? Or is this government's new panel just about slapping a new paint job on an unpopular idea?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** We've been building public transit in record amounts over the last 10 years. We have plans in the very near future to continue that build.

Looking forward into the future, we know that gridlock is a serious issue in the GTA. But right across this province, we need to keep building public transit. But you can't build it for free. You've got to be visionary about this. You've got to get out from under the politics of this issue. Be straight with the people of Ontario. Be honest with the people of Ontario and tell them that, look, if we're going to spend \$32 billion over the next dozen or so years, we're going to have to find a way to pay for it. That's all we ask from the leader opposite: Be straight up with the people of Ontario—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

Final supplementary.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Trinity-Spadina.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I beg your pardon.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I think what the people want is for their government to be fair with the people of Ontario. That's what they want to see, some fairness.

Yesterday, we learned that the Premier will be paying the chair of her taxes and tolls panel up to \$90,000 for three months' work. That means in three months she'll make more money than the average Ontario family earns in an entire year.

People see the Liberal government asking them to pay more and more as it's telling corporations that they get to pay less and less. And they see the lucrative fees being handed out to people who write a study about a study.

Does the Acting Premier really think that that looks fair to the people of Ontario?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** To the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I know the leader of the third party knows we're in a minority government. The only revenue tool that that party has supported so far wouldn't build you more than about three subway stops.

We have a \$50-billion major plan. The Ministry of Transportation, if you've been following this, and the response to the Metrolinx panel has generated several new ideas on funding models that we are pursuing aggressively—and the Ministries of Infrastructure and Transportation and Metrolinx are working, Mr. Speaker. As you know, we've also had responses from almost every municipality in the region, who also have advanced ideas and new ideas for partnerships, which we are also going to include in this.

~ This is not an advisory committee as much as an implementation committee, because right now we have two parties in opposition who don't want to fund transit, don't want to build it. They just want to pass motions and debate it. We're over debating it; we're building it.

#### GOVERNMENT'S AGENDA

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is to the Acting Premier as well. People are looking to this government for real results that will make their lives more affordable. Instead, they see Liberals planning study after study and having hundreds of conversations about plans to make their lives more expensive. And the only people who seem to be getting results from the Liberals are consultants and the lucky few who benefit from new corporate tax loopholes. Would the Acting Premier agree that this isn't fair?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** What's fair is working to reduce auto insurance rates for Ontario families across this province, and we're working on a 15% reduction. What's fair is working to create jobs for our young people, and our youth jobs strategy is going to create 30,000 jobs over the next two years for young people across this province. What's fair is making sure that we have home care available to our parents and our grandparents, and we're investing to make sure that that's the case. What's fair is making sure that people in the GTA and across this province can get to and from work and to and from school in a reasonable amount of time by reducing gridlock, and that's why we're the only party in this Legislature that's investing in public transit, funding public transit. You ought to get on with us with that initiative. We need your support. We need you to tell us how you're going to pay for your plan.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** People are looking to the government for results that make their lives easier, but the government seems to be determined to make life less affordable. Media reports today quote Liberal insiders saying that they would like to raise the HST but that it is "politically unsaleable."

Will the Acting Premier confirm that hiking the unfair HST is off the table—or is the government still hoping that enough conversation will actually make it acceptable?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** It's becoming increasingly obvious as we go through challenging times, as we have to make decisions to keep building a strong economy and creating jobs, that the opposition are going to continue to—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. I've noticed a rather interesting trend today, it's not always the case, but today: When the questions are put, it's quite quiet; as soon as the answer starts, it gets extremely loud and boisterous. I think that—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** And I don't need the member from Halton editorializing while I'm speaking either—so I'm asking you all to lower the temperature.

Please answer.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Mr. Speaker, this is a time for leadership. We have a Premier that's standing up for the people of Ontario to ensure that when we make commitments on things like public transit, we're going to fund it. I don't think that's too much to ask. I would think the people of Ontario would want the party opposite and the other party opposite to be that straight up with them. If they're going to support things like investments in public transit, if they're going to support the initiatives we're taking to build a strong economy, that they'll also be straight up with the people of Ontario about how they're going to fund them.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Over the summer we heard from a lot of people, and they made it clear that they expected us to make their lives affordable and get results for them. That's why we're focused on getting action for drivers, getting action for seniors waiting for home care, getting action for young people who need jobs, and fairness so people can actually start rebuilding some trust in their government again.

My question, and it's a simple one: When is the government going to stop having endless conversations about how to make life less fair and start focusing on real results for the people who sent us here?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** That's exactly what we're doing, getting real results for the people of Ontario. We're in the process now of putting in place a 15% reduction in auto insurance—thank you for your support on that. We're in the process of putting together a \$295-million strategy to help 30,000 young people find jobs. We would appreciate your support on that too. We're in the process of ensuring that we expand home care across this province so our seniors can stay in their homes longer. We're determined to get that done, and we're well on the way. We're in the process of building reliable roads and a public transit system we can be proud of that will rid us



of the gridlock that we have in places like the GTA, help us create jobs and build a stronger economy. We need your support on that too. We need you as well, though, to fess up to the fact that we need revenue sources in order to be able to pay for that going forward.

### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** My question is for the Minister of Transportation. Metrolinx has conducted more than 100 meetings, had 12 public round tables, had a residents' reference panel consisting of 36 people that met for four weeks. I find it totally unnecessary that we have to now put another panel in place and that the result of this panel, of course, is going to undermine the work that Metrolinx has already done.

I'd like to point out, also, that the city of Toronto council met on this matter and resoundingly rejected these revenue tools. Now, I don't know what more information you need. The board of trade met on this. The board of trade had public meetings. The other citizens' group CivicAction had public meetings. The public has met until they're blue in the face on this. It's time for action.

I want to know: Is this just another Liberal stall?

1100

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** They are getting action. We have boring machines right now drilling all across the GTHA. We have the Viva bus service operating, we announced, and have the Pulse service bus. We have 15 major projects. We are in the middle of the biggest build-out of transit in the history of this province, and that's action.

The member opposite had a very insightful observation yesterday, and I want to commend him on it. He pointed out to this House that when the Tories got elected, the NDP had promised \$3 billion of transit investment. The NDP put no money into it, very similar to today, and the Tories did what we know they do: They filled in the holes and cancelled the project. So here we are: a party that promises billions of dollars in transit can't deliver the money, and one that only knows how to fill in holes.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** Minister, what I would like to know is that when you instituted the all-day kindergarten, did you have a panel to show how you were going to pay for that? Or is it that when you want something, you don't need a panel, but when you want to stall and not do the work, then you put up a panel so that you don't have to?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Minister.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, I—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All right, stop the clock.

I tried one way; now I'll do it the other way. The next person who gets carried away when somebody is trying to answer will be warned, and you know what happens after you're warned: Next time you're out.

Minister.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** The member opposite should know Anne Golden. You can say many things about Anne, but one thing you can't say is she doesn't get results. She is one of the toughest, most experienced people I know. On this panel are Iain Dobson and other people from the private sector, and Gordon Chong, who are some of the leading experts on value planning and value capture.

One of the things that we are looking at—I know the members opposite, from the volume of talking, aren't interested in reading or listening, which is why they are not in government.

Right now, for example—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

### LONG-TERM CARE

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** My question is for the Acting Premier. Simone and Everett Price are a 93-year-old couple in my riding of London West who have been separated over a year by the long-term-care system after 67 years of marriage. In March, their daughter Marilyn Savage came to Queen's Park to plead for their reunification. It wasn't the first time this family reached out to this government for help, and it wasn't the first time this government failed to act.

Marilyn Savage is here once again today, hoping for a better result. Will the government finally respect the principle of spousal reunification in the long-term-care act and bring her parents back together?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I'm delighted to welcome the guests who are here today, and I thank them for attending question period. I want to tell them, as our Minister of Health has said time and time again, we are investing in long-term care in record amounts. We have provided, in fact, a full transformation within long-term care.

There is still more work to do, but this is an area that we've put a considerable amount of attention to because we understand the challenge when a couple is separated. We all, as members in this Legislature, have seen this in our own constituency offices, where we've seen these circumstances. Our hearts go out to the couple who are involved in this particular case. I know that the Minister of Health is dedicated to continuing to make improvements and continuing to drive forward on a policy that we've brought a very, very long way in the last number of years.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I want to point out to the Acting Premier that when this question was asked six months ago, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care stood in her place, wrung her hands and passed the buck to the local CCAC, even while acknowledging that accommo-

dating the Prices is the right thing to do. The CCAC is only following the rules set out by the government, and it is the rules that must change.

The emotional impact of this forced separation is taking its toll on this 93-year-old couple. This isn't the way a seven-decade love story is supposed to end in Ontario.

Will the government finally show some compassion, respect the spirit of the Long-Term Care Homes Act and take responsibility for reuniting the Prices before it is too late?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please.

Acting Premier.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Thank you to the member for one of her first questions. That is a good question, and I really appreciate you raising it here today.

Spousal reunification is incredibly important, and that's why, in 2008, we introduced new regulations under Ontario's long-term-care homes legislation, to enable residents in different homes to switch places if the move is mutually desired. We gave the highest priority to residents who are seeking to be reunited with a spouse or a partner. We've also ensured that nobody—nobody—will be financially penalized for wanting to stay together, by ensuring that rate reduction systems are in place for couples as well.

The minister is quite aware that there's still more work to do in this area. I know the minister is working hard to do all that we can to continue these improvements that we got started. We're proud of how far we've come, but certainly I'd encourage the member to work with the local CCAC, and I'll bring this to the attention of the minister as well.

### SCHOOL SAFETY

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** My question is for the Minister of Education. Parents in my riding of York South-Weston and across Ontario take pride in knowing that they are sending their children to some of the safest schools in the world.

Minister, you have spoken to this House before about several of the efforts this government has made to make our schools safe. Initiatives such as the Safe Welcome Program and our Accepting Schools Act are just a few examples.

These initiatives would not be possible without the dedication of our teachers to their students. However, in extremely rare circumstances, there have been issues around teachers' professionalism and interaction with their students.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: In these rare cases, how do we ensure that our students are protected and safe?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Thank you to the member for York South-Weston for her advocacy for school safety.

The member is absolutely correct. We know that the vast majority of our teachers are professionals who care about their students' safety and well-being, along with their student achievement. We know that they put their students first.

However, last year, Justice LeSage released a report that contained 49 recommendations to modernize the Ontario College of Teachers' investigation and discipline practices. Since the release of this report, my ministry has been working very closely with the college to address all of these recommendations. I'm pleased that the college has moved quickly and has already begun to implement some of these changes.

But in order to fully implement the report, to fully implement all of the recommendations, we need to make legislative changes as well. Yesterday, I was pleased to table the Protecting Students Act to do just that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** Thank you to the minister for that initial response.

It is important—very important—for parents to know and have access to as much information as possible when it concerns their child's safety. In the past, parents have had difficulty accessing information regarding disciplinary decisions made by the college, and often these decisions can take years to be resolved.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: How will this legislation ensure that parents have access to this important information and that decisions can be made in a timely way?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Again, the member raises a couple of absolutely excellent points around transparency and fairness, and they are addressed in the proposed legislation.

If passed, the Protecting Students Act would require the college to publish all of the college's discipline committee decisions. Furthermore, the legislation would impose timelines to resolve cases more efficiently.

### 1110

Both of these pieces of the legislation will ensure that parents have easily accessible data and that the overall efficiency of the investigation and discipline process will improve. Furthermore, this proposed legislation will strengthen the authority of the College of Teachers to take action while ensuring the process is open and transparent for everyone involved. That's why it's important that this legislation be passed quickly.

I hope that every member of this House will support the legislation.

### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Frank Klees:** My question is to the Minister of Transportation. The people of this province are tired of unelected people being appointed to panel after panel to make the important decisions that should be made here. Once again, we have a panel now being appointed by the minister to deal with funding of infrastructure.



We have a recommendation for the minister: Will the minister agree to appoint an all-party committee made up of equal membership of all three parties, that would be mandated to find the necessary funds to fund our infrastructure needs out of our existing \$128-billion budget and the appropriate private sector investments? Will the minister agree to that kind of appointment of parliamentarians and give them a 60-day mandate to find the solution? We're looking forward to working with the government to do exactly that.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Right now, this region alone in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area is competing with London. The national government in the UK is putting \$24 billion into subways. Our national government in our economic capital is putting less than 1% total in that. That's what we're competing with.

Liberal governments now have invested over \$15 billion; that's currently being invested. Conservative-run governments at the other levels have put zero into the transit. We cannot continue with the horrible neglect in Ottawa of our economic capital. Toronto deserves the same support from Canada that London gets from Britain, that Paris gets from France and that New York gets from the Federal Department of Transportation, and we're doing more than our part: 90% of the funding. Four percent—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I know you don't want to eye me because you know I'm going to say something, so I'm just going to leave it this way. You are on the edge.

*Supplementary?*

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I'd like to readdress my question to the Minister of Transportation because we agree that the funding challenge is great. The proposal that we're making to the minister and to the government—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of the Environment, come to order.

**Mr. Frank Klees:**—is that we strike an all-party committee of this Legislature, with equal membership from all three parties, that is charged with the responsibility to find the funding necessary for our infrastructure out of our existing \$128-billion budget and the appropriate private sector investments, so that we don't have to defer that decision to a panel that is simply going to tax people to death in this province. Why will the minister not accept our proposal that parliamentarians be charged with that responsibility? Give them 60 days to get the job done. Let's get on with the work.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** We on this side of the House will be more than glad to consider that kind of option or partnership when the member opposite can find a single Conservative politician in Canada or Ontario who will write a cheque for a subway or an LRT. You can't keep playing politics. You can't talk subways and talk rapid transit and not invest.

Mr. Cameron, in the United Kingdom, understands that for London to compete with Toronto, Berlin and

Shanghai, the British government has to make sure London is the most mobile centre. When the member opposite and when the Conservatives opposite can engage the Conservatives at city hall or in Ottawa and demonstrate where they do control government to write a cheque, I will take some comfort in that, but they should start getting on the phones. Mr. Harper's phone number is 613-992-4211.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** My question is for the Acting Premier. People in Kitchener–Waterloo are looking at the headlines, and they are concerned about the possibility of layoffs at BlackBerry. They are also concerned about this government's notable silence on job creation. BlackBerry has been at the heart of Kitchener–Waterloo's growth and its world-class technology centre. Over time, the core of innovative thinkers and engineers have created an ecosystem where small and large tech companies have helped each other grow.

When are we going to hear a plan from this government that supports Kitchener–Waterloo's growth, whether it's our tech sector, manufacturing, food processing or other important parts of our local economy?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** For the member to see a plan that supports all of those sectors, she just has to open her eyes. We've been working on this for a very long period of time. We have an economic development strategy here that has created 477,300 net new jobs since the recession. That's not bad; in fact, that's better than most other jurisdictions anywhere in North America, and most economies anywhere.

Let me say this about the Kitchener–Waterloo area: We're working very closely with the city there, we're working very closely with the business community, and we're working very closely with an organization that we have a great deal of respect for, Communitech, to ensure that any displaced workers, as a result of the challenges that they are facing, are assisted. The Tech Jobs Connex program that has been set up there has been doing an excellent job because of the expertise in that area, something that I know the member is proud of, and something that all Ontarians should be proud of, because Kitchener–Waterloo will get through this.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** People in my riding are concerned about the future of their jobs. They want good jobs, not part-time, precarious poverty jobs, especially because they haven't heard a comprehensive plan that inspires confidence in Ontario's economy.

I look forward to a strong future for BlackBerry, and I look forward to the growing diversity of our tech sector.

When people are concerned about their jobs, they want to know that there is a plan to create good jobs. Does the government actually have a jobs plan, or are they waiting for more ideas from New Democrats? Because that certainly can be arranged.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I think the member ought to have a little more confidence in her own community. When you look at that community, there are over 1,000 high-tech companies operating there, with over 30,000 people employed. Yes, we all know that BlackBerry is going through challenging times, but we also know that that region is a hub of innovation, a hub of entrepreneurialism.

We have invested in that region. We've invested in Communitech, we've invested in the universities there, and we're helping to drive that sense of innovation, that can-doism that exists in that community. We have a member, our House leader, who is one of the local leaders in that community. He will ensure that we'll continue to work with the business community and we'll continue to work with our stakeholders to ensure that Kitchener–Waterloo remains one of the strong areas of growth in our province.

#### FAMILY CAREGIVER LEAVE

**Ms. Soo Wong:** My question is for the Minister of Labour. Minister, we all know how tough it is to balance work when caring full-time for your children, your aging parents, or both. That is why I am proud to support Bill 21, the Leaves to Help Families Act, which will provide Ontarians with three different leaves so that they can be there for their families when they need to be there.

Having worked as a nurse, I feel strongly about this bill and its intent to ease stress on Ontarians. More importantly, my constituents in Scarborough–Agincourt strongly support this bill. My office continues to receive petitions each week, and I have heard from hundreds of residents what they want to see about this bill. To date, I have presented petitions on this issue to the House a total of 12 times. What is truly disappointing is the last line of the petition, which states, “That the Legislative Assembly ... pass and enact, during spring of 2013, Bill 21, the Leaves to Help Families Act.”

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: Can he please remind the House how important it is to pass this bill for all Ontarians?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I want to thank the member from Scarborough–Agincourt for her absolutely incredible advocacy on this matter. She is correct; she has actually submitted quite a few petitions and has been speaking quite actively on this very important matter of the family caregiver leave act, Bill 21.

1120

This bill is about compassion. It is about building a compassionate Ontario, an Ontario where we look after each other, and it is disheartening to see that in this Legislature the debate on this bill continues to go on and on. We're literally, I think, running into the eleventh hour of debate on this legislation. I understand that all members support the bill. However, we're not sending the matter back to the committee for consideration.

Just two days ago, I had the opportunity to meet with a representative from the Alzheimer society, who stressed

to me how important it is that this bill gets to the committee so that they and other members of the caregiver coalition are able to speak to this bill—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I want to thank the minister for his remarks. I must admit, it is frustrating to hear, day after day, about this bill and the wide support across both parties opposite. Also, every Ontarian supports this bill—those I've spoken to. But we know that this bill has been stalled in the House time and time again, and I just want to remind the members that we have so many bills in this House. I'll give you examples: Bill 55, the Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act, was debated for 18 hours and 39 minutes; Bill 11 on air ambulances was debated for 19 hours and 14 minutes; Bill 36, the Local Food Act, has been debated for 25 hours and 35 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: Can he please explain some of the finer points of this bill that might be missed to the House?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I agree with the member from Scarborough–Agincourt that there are many other pressing and important bills in this House that have taken a lot of debate. We need to pass this bill. This bill, at its core, is about building a compassionate society. It's about making sure that members of our families are able to look after each other if they're not feeling well.

Speaker, through you, I'm asking all the members of the opposition today to think about the Ontarians who are struggling every day to balance their work and family responsibilities. Let's come together. Let's work together and call this bill for a second reading vote. Let's send this bill to committee so that we can hear from our communities and pass this bill into law.

#### TENDERING PROCESS

**Mr. Michael Harris:** My question was for the Premier; however, I'll ask the Minister of Labour. Minister, we've heard the Premier talk a lot about the need to restore fairness in Ontario's construction industry. Well, the Fair and Open Tendering Act would do exactly that. By passing this bill, we would save Ontario taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars every year, by preserving and restoring the ability of municipalities and school boards to openly tender contracts for large infrastructure projects.

To take a stand for taxpayers, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Mayors and Regional Chairs of Ontario and the Large Urban Mayors' Caucus of Ontario have all endorsed this important legislative reform.

Minister, will you take a stand for Ontario municipalities and taxpayers by voting in favour of the Fair and Open Tendering Act today?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Before I go to the Minister of Labour, the question was put in a way that I do want to use it as a reminder, including some of the things I've heard from this side: We do not refer to some-



body's presence here one way or the other or try to find a way to make comment on somebody's presence or not being here. So I'm asking all members to respect that tradition and stay on track.

Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I want to thank the member from Kitchener—Conestoga for the question and for the work he's been doing on this bill. He and I had the opportunity to meet as well. We've spoken a couple of times now. I appreciate the work he is doing and I look forward to a very meaningful debate this afternoon on this bill.

Our government believes in fair and balanced labour relations. When bargaining a collective agreement, parties are free to negotiate terms that restrict the ability of the employer to contract only with unionized contractors. Some broader public service employers have become bound to province-wide construction industry collective agreements that contain restrictions on contracting out when the employees unionize. However, if a party feels that they should not be bound to a province-wide collective agreement, they do have options. In the legislation, there is a non-construction employer exemption that exists that municipalities can apply to—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Minister, when the Premier was talking about Ontario's construction industry last week, she said, "It only makes sense for there to be some fairness in the system...." So I hope you would agree that the province should no longer stand by and allow thousands of qualified contractors to be deprived of their right to work on public infrastructure in the community where they live, work and pay taxes.

This labour practice is wrong and you know it. Discriminating against qualified contractors on the basis of who they have chosen to associate with is patently unfair and unacceptable.

Minister, will you stop dividing Ontarians and take action to restore fairness in Ontario's construction industry today?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, as I was mentioning earlier, there is a very specific non-construction employer exemption that exists under the Ontario Labour Relations Act, and if a municipality or a public entity feels that they're not a construction employer, they can file an application with the Ontario Labour Relations Board. In fact, the member opposite must know that that exemption was actually brought in by the then Minister of Labour, Jim Flaherty, in 1998. Very clearly, those criteria and that exemption was renewed or refined again in 2000 by the Progressive Conservative Party when they were in government.

In fact, Speaker, I find it very interesting that at Hamilton city council, when a debate was taking place on this particular private members' vote that will be debated this afternoon, the city councillor from Stoney Creek and former PC Minister of Labour, Brad Clark, refused to support the motion. He said, "What is proposed here is draconian. It would terminate all collective agreements."

## THUNDER BAY GENERATING STATION

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Minister of Energy. I was in Thunder Bay last week speaking with municipal leaders, energy and mining experts and the chamber of commerce. They want answers from the minister about Thunder Bay's generating station. Liberals promised a conversion and then cancelled it, then promised it again and then cancelled it again.

People of Thunder Bay want some certainty. The Premier and the minister have had enough time to make a decision, and now the northwest deserves an answer. Will this government be converting the Thunder Bay Generating Station to natural gas?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I thank the leader of the third party for the question.

Mr. Speaker, we have been putting in a lot of time and attention, and indeed consultation, with people from Thunder Bay and the Dryden area. We had some very significant meetings at the AMO conference. We are well into finalizing details on that particular issue.

One thing we have done is acknowledge, in a recent report that just came out from the Ontario Power Authority, the tremendous requirement for new generation in the northwest. That particular report is online and I encourage the leader of the third party to read it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Thanks for the advice. I've read the report, Speaker.

The people of northwestern Ontario need to know that their region has the energy necessary to grow, to create new jobs, and to take its place as an economic leader in the province. They can't do that if there is uncertainty over how they will meet their energy needs going into the next years and decades ahead. When can the people in northwestern Ontario expect this government's decision about the future of the Thunder Bay Generating Station gas conversion?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, I'm concerned that the leader of the third party is speaking only about Thunder Bay and that one particular generating station. There is a very significant challenge in northwestern Ontario, including north of Dryden, including Thunder Bay and including west of Thunder Bay. We are looking at all of those. We will be providing an answer which will include very significant investments in transmission and generation in that part of the province, probably within three or four weeks.

I would ask the leader to be a little more patient and also be mindful that any future generating plant in Thunder Bay will be used six hours per year.

## RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** My question is for the Minister of Research and Innovation. Our government has continued to help companies in their efforts to commercialize innovative technologies in Ontario because it leads to more high-skilled jobs and better opportunities for eco-

conomic growth. Providing the support needed to companies undertaking innovative technologies develops the opportunities to create leading-edge, globally competitive companies. By supporting great ideas, innovative thinking and new-tech companies today, we will help create the products, services and jobs that will drive Ontario's economy in the future. Many of these technologies need to be proven on a small scale before they can be implemented in larger-scale real-world applications.

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**Mr. Speaker,** through you to the minister: What is this government doing to support these companies with promising and innovative technologies?

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** I would like to thank the member from Ottawa—Orléans for that question. Our government recognizes the importance of providing financial assistance to innovative companies in order to thrive not only in Ontario but in the global market.

One of our initiatives is the Innovation Demonstration Fund. This fund provides assistance to companies looking to commercialize new green technologies. To date, the Innovation Demonstration Fund has assisted 41 projects, with a total commitment of \$96.1 million, and helped create over 4,100 jobs.

Our government also recognizes the importance of investments in early-stage innovative companies. Another initiative of our government is the Investment Accelerator Fund. This fund provides assistance to companies who are in the early stage. To date, the Investment Accelerator Fund program has made investments in 68 promising Ontario companies and invested \$35 million.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** I'm pleased to hear that our government is making investments that will help support early-stage innovative companies. With high-growth companies creating 50% to 60% of the net new jobs in Ontario, access to capital is critical for start-up and early-stage innovative companies.

Our government's budget reiterated its commitment to support early-stage companies through our \$50-million investment in the Ontario Venture Capital Fund II. This fund, with the expertise to accelerate commercialization of new products, services and ideas, will help foster the right climate to attract investment, support innovation, create jobs and grow Ontario's economy.

**Mr. Speaker,** back to the Minister of Research and Innovation: What else has the government done to support early-stage innovative enterprises?

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** I want to thank, again, the member from Ottawa—Orléans for that question.

Access to risk capital is the key, and critical to start-up and early-stage companies. That's why our government, in 2008, has created the Ontario Venture Capital Fund, with an investment of \$95 million, which leverages, actually, \$115 million from the private sector to form a venture capital fund in the amount of \$205 million. That created 1,500 jobs.

This year, we committed \$50 million to create another venture capital funding collaboration with our federal

government. This fund is going to create \$300 million from the public sector, and it will contribute to the economy of this province in the amount of \$4.4 billion in the next 12 years.

**Mr. Speaker,** our government supports great ideas, innovative thinking and new technology today in order to grow our economy tomorrow.

## YOUTH SERVICES

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** My question is to the Minister of Children and Youth Services today. At the historic Queen's Park Youth Leaving Care hearings almost two years ago, I learned of a significant problem in child welfare. Youth who find themselves in need for the first time at age 16 or 17, whether they slipped through the cracks or their situation has suddenly changed, are denied access to the very support services that are available to their same-age peers who are already in the child welfare system. Speaker, I don't want to mince words here: This is discrimination. And it is a contravention of the Canadian charter and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The greater child welfare community has been lobbying for this change for over a decade.

Minister, please tell me, why has this Liberal government been tolerating this injustice for so many years?

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** Thank you for bringing forward the recommendations that came forward from the Youth Leaving Care and their blueprint. Frankly, our government has been responding to those recommendations and we've been following their advice. We've developed new resources and supports to help new youth, many of them having been announced this summer, in terms of increased supports, in terms of mental health workers in our community, in terms of access to post-secondary university.

We are certainly listening to our Youth Leaving Care. We have followed up on many of their recommendations. We will continue to work with the group to move forward to ensure that all our youth are able to succeed in this province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Lack of service to these youth in need doesn't just impact them; it impacts all of us as a greater Ontario community. Under the current system, these children are erroneously treated as adults. Their limited options include homeless shelters, suing their parents and making a case for Ontario Works. It should come as no surprise that they struggle to stay in school, they're frequently victims of violent crime, as well as have elevated rates of incarceration and have more hospitalizations due to high-risk street behaviours.

In the developed world, Ontario lags behind all jurisdictions, doing the least amount of work for this group of youth. You must understand that this isn't a personal battle down a dark path for these children. It's all of our battle. It's a province-wide crisis.

Minister, leaving no child behind requires more than lip service. This systemic error cannot be tolerated any



longer. Will you and your caucus see the light and support Bill 88 this afternoon, which corrects these problems?

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** Again, I want to thank the member opposite for your question. I'm glad you're bringing forward the concerns of our youth—again, something that we've been working on for some time. My children are in that age group, so certainly I have a personal connection to youth and the supports that are available to them.

I look forward to the debate this afternoon. The ministry will carefully consider the proposed amendments and how we can improve services to youth—again, an issue that I've been working quite diligently on since becoming minister.

### HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Paul Miller:** My question is to the Acting Premier. On April 24, I asked a question to the Minister of Health on behalf of the Cassavetes family. On the first anniversary of their daughter's passing, they were in this Legislature still trying to get answers to the very simple questions about what went horribly wrong at Sick Kids. The minister met with the family but, Speaker, why has this minister done absolutely nothing to respond to the concerns of this family?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** As always, our concern and our thoughts are always with the family in these kinds of circumstances. I'm not familiar with this particular situation, Mr. Speaker; I'm sure the Minister of Health, having received the question before, is. I'm sure she would take every measure she can to help the member in any way that she can.

We're working really hard, and have been for a number of years, to continue to invest in health care and continue to make improvements. We are very determined to transform our health care system to ensure that it continues to be sustainable into the future. We've gone from having the highest wait times in the country to the lowest, which is something that we can all be proud of. But with regard to this particular issue, I'll be happy to pass along to the minister that you asked another question on it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Speaker, on April 24, the minister said, "As I said in the first question, I will be more than happy to meet with the family after question period, and I can learn more about this situation and make sure that you get answers that you deserve." But has she done this or anything for the family? No. The minister has done absolutely nothing. Yet another broken Liberal promise, this time to a grieving family.

Will this minister finally do what she said she would do and get the answers this family deserves, while ensuring implementation of Ombudsman oversight?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I appreciate the question from the member opposite and commend him for going to bat for his constituents. At the same time, this province has never had a health minister that has been so dedicated to

working to ensure that we have the best-quality health care system in this province. As I said before, we've gone from some of the highest wait times in the country to a province now that is seen nationwide as having the lowest wait times. That wasn't easy. It took a lot of investment. It took a lot of work. But I'll certainly ensure that the minister is made aware of the question that the member asked. I'm sure the minister will be happy to get back to the member.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Whitby—Oshawa on a point of order.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** Given the support that I've heard this morning, I wish to seek unanimous consent of this Legislature to immediately strike the select committee so that it can begin its work on developmental services.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Whitby—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I would like to put the question first before we make any decisions on anything.

The member from Whitby—Oshawa has asked for unanimous consent to strike a committee immediately. Do I hear agreement? I heard a no.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm not going to give up on this.

There are no deferred votes. Therefore, this House stands recessed until 1 p.m.

*The House recessed from 1140 to 1300.*

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** From the Armenian-Canadian community, in the east members' gallery, we have Hratch Aynedjian, Vahan Ajamian and Krikor Baghdasarian. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Rob Leone:** I would like to introduce Jan Liggett and Les Kadar from Cambridge, who are here to witness the proceedings of Bill 73. I know Jim Kelly is also from Cambridge; he is also going to be witnessing the proceedings on Bill 73. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Today it's my pleasure to introduce my brother Bob. His lovely wife, Rosemary, and, of course, my lovely wife Carole are here in the west gallery.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You know I can't resist: So that's why you're behaving today?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Children and Youth Services.

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** I'm standing, actually, on a bit of a point of order, to correct my record from earlier today.

When I introduced our guest, I may have said "We to Me" instead of "Me to We" of the award that Sarah

Lewis won. I just wanted to ensure that the record had it correct.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. The member does have a right to correct her record.

I will ensure that, if there are lots of introductions, we'll get them all done.

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** It gives me great pleasure to introduce to the Legislature a constituent of mine, Stephen Bauld, who is in the west wing today.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### TALL SHIPS

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Thousands of Ontarians sailed back to the year 1812 during this summer's Tall Ships tour. The tour, presented by Redpath Sugar and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, and locally by the city of Owen Sound's economic development department, saw majestic tall ships sailing to 16 Ontario ports throughout the summer, commemorating the bicentennial of the War of 1812.

The tour proved to be a godsend for my riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, where it was held in conjunction and cross-promoted with the very successful annual Summerfolk festival.

The Pride of Baltimore II, a 157-foot reproduction of an 1812-era topsail schooner privateer; the Playfair, a 72-foot two-masted square-rig brigantine; and Liana's Ransom, an 85-foot steel-hulled schooner, sailed the Owen Sound harbour between August 16 and 18.

Early estimated attendance in Owen Sound, including both ticket purchasers and others who came to the area to watch the tall ships, was well in excess of 15,000 people. Attendance at southern Georgian Bay was over 70,000 people and, for all Tall Ships venues across Ontario, was over 900,000 people. Tall Ships festival organizers Paul Eichhorn and Doug Cleverley said the ships were so successful, they could have sold twice as many tickets.

With tourism playing a key economic role in Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, events such as this are a valued and wonderful boost to our local business community and help to provide jobs at a time when they are surely needed.

The next time a fleet of tall ships sails into the Great Lakes is 2016, so I hope the House joins me in encouraging the government to get on board and support the next one.

### HAMILTON MUSIC COLLECTIVE

**Mr. Paul Miller:** The Hamilton Music Collective program An Instrument for Every Child is a successful Hamilton inner-city free music program for children from grades 1 to 4. So far, it is in six Hamilton schools.

Last Tuesday evening in Ancaster, it was my honour to attend the event marking the commencement of the fourth year of this program and to present the Trillium

Foundation cheque for \$35,000, which will purchase 140 musical instruments and provide free music instruction for the children.

I want to thank businessman Paul Lloyd, who provided the initial seed money of \$125,000 in 2010 to get this program launched.

The result of the program will be that children from challenged neighbourhoods will have increased access to creative instruction, a wonderful initiative that I am pleased is now supported by our Ontario Trillium Foundation.

But I'm particularly proud to thank my brother Bob, who is here today with his wife Rosemary and is the volunteer CEO of the Hamilton Music Collective, for his ongoing good work with this group for our inner-city children. It's a wonderful program, and I hope the government gets behind this in a big way.

### ARMENIAN COMMUNITY

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to rise and lend my voice to the others here today in offering congratulations as we celebrate 22 years of Armenian independence. I know that I join my colleague and friend, the member for Oak Ridges–Markham, in offering greetings to the members of our Armenian community who are here at Queen's Park today, and also to the many Armenian leaders and families living in our great province.

On September 21, 1991, Armenians voted overwhelmingly in favour of independence after 70 years of Soviet rule, and today Armenia grows and prospers as a free and independent state.

In Ontario we have been fortunate to welcome many Armenians into our community since the first Armenians arrived in Canada in the late 1980s. Armenians have a rich culture and history, and no doubt contribute to our great province called Ontario.

The Armenian Community Centre of Toronto serves my riding of Scarborough–Agincourt, and I've had the pleasure of working closely with many community leaders as well as residents in my riding. On this day of celebration and remembrance I would like to thank the Armenian Community Centre for the great work they do in our community.

Congratulations to Armenian Canadians all across the province for 22 years of independence.

### WALSH'S SNUG

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'd like to congratulate Walsh's Snug in Newcastle on being named the number one Irish restaurant in all of Ontario. I want to congratulate John and Leslie Walsh and their staff on this very well-deserved award. The award is from TripAdvisor, the world's largest online travel website. The Snug was reviewed and received raving reviews from visitors who report that the food is excellent and the owners and staff are always attentive and friendly.



The Snug was named after a small private room in an Irish pub at the heart of the pub itself. The room was typically the place for private meetings, convivial conversations and perhaps a business deal or two. The Snug is a great example of a small business in my riding that is committed to excellence and outstanding customer service for the convenience and consideration of their patrons. I am pleased to learn that this little bit of Ireland in downtown Newcastle has been recognized throughout Ontario.

For true Irish fare and atmosphere, plan a visit to the King Street Newcastle pub called the Snug. I'd encourage everyone to do it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We wouldn't want to snub the Snug.

### RUN FOR HEROES MARATHON

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Thousands of runners of all ages are expected at this year's Run for Heroes Marathon in Amherstburg this weekend. Trumpeted by organizers as one of the flattest and fastest such foot races, only 10 metres separate the lowest from the highest elevation. This official run for the battle of 1812 bicentennial is a Boston Marathon qualifier.

This weekend includes a 42-, 21-, 10- and five-kilometre race and walk events, with the 42-kilometre full marathon starting at 7 a.m. on Sunday, October 23. A health and fitness expo at the United Communities Credit Union will also take place in Amherstburg, and it's being held in conjunction with the races. On Saturday, we'll see a five-kilometre walk and a 300-metre kids' dash around Fort Malden.

For more details people can visit [www.runningflat.com](http://www.runningflat.com). All proceeds benefit the caregiver program of the Alzheimer Society of Windsor-Essex County, and pledge forms can be found at [alzheimerwindsor.com](http://alzheimerwindsor.com).

According to the organizers, heroes live amongst us. They raise the bar and make us all better people. This run allows you to say, "I'm running for the person who made a difference in my life."

I want to give some credit and a shout-out to Chris Uszynski, who is the organizer, and the town of Amherstburg, which puts on a wonderful series of events throughout the year. In particular, I want to acknowledge a runner from the community of Stoney Point, Cathy Chauvin, who is a special constituent who will be running for her son Joe this weekend. I wish her Godspeed. Have a great run and have a great time.

### LLOYDTOWN REBELLION

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** This September marks the 175th anniversary of the death of Jesse Lloyd, who, along with his close ally William Lyon Mackenzie, was a leading reformer and advocate for responsible government in Upper Canada during the 1830s.

### 1310

In the late 1820s, he founded Lloydtown, a hamlet located in King township, in my great riding of Oak Ridges-Markham, which played a significant role in the Upper Canada Rebellion of 1837. Lloyd's passion for democracy spread, and his grist mill in Lloydtown became a meeting place for citizens to express their displeasure against the anti-democratic governing establishment, the Tory Family Compact. These meetings became the foundation of the Lloydtown rebellion.

A plan finalized at a meeting in Lloydtown was eventually established for groups of reformers to meet at Montgomery's Tavern, where they would march down Yonge Street to further their cause. On their march, the reformers originally outnumbered the local militia. However, reinforcements arrived, and the reformers were forced to retreat. Known today as the Battle of Montgomery's Tavern, it is seen as one of the most significant events of the Upper Canada Rebellion. Although the battle was lost, the war was not, as responsible government was a key recommendation of the Durham report of 1839.

Today a statue of Jesse Lloyd stands proudly in Lloydtown as a monument to the quest for responsible government and the people who fought for it in Ontario.

### ONTARIO JUNIOR CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARDS

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** Founded in 1950 and based in Burlington, the Ontario Community Newspaper Association—OCNA for short—is a non-profit industry association made up of more than 300 member newspapers across the province. Those papers reach virtually every household in Ontario. It's quite an accomplishment, and the OCNA is dedicated to making sure that this remarkable success continues.

One of the ways they do that is by strengthening community connections. In point: This week, with the support of program sponsors TD Bank Group and Direct Energy, the OCNA launched its 2013 Ontario Junior Citizen of the Year Award program. Every year, these awards celebrate wonderful examples of courage, leadership and community spirit among young people across Ontario. This program spotlights the exceptional contributions that the young leaders of tomorrow are making in their communities every year.

You can help to make sure that these exceptional young people are recognized. Any resident of Ontario aged six to 17 is eligible. Nominations may come from anyone in the community. You can learn more about the program at [www.ocna.org/juniorcitizen](http://www.ocna.org/juniorcitizen), and you can make nominations until November 30, 2013.

I would invite everyone to celebrate the best of our children and youth.

## ABSOLUTE WORLD TOWERS

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** Speaker, I was just thinking that if there was ever a situation that came to pass that you or any of these MPPs were driving through Mississauga and were wondering where the heck is Mississauga East–Cooksville, well, it's gotten a lot easier. All you have to do is look up, way up, and you will see skyscrapers like no other. I'm referring to Mississauga's Absolute World Towers 1 and 2. An iconic structure right in the centre of downtown Mississauga, these two towers define the Mississauga skyline.

It was back in 2006 that the city of Mississauga called for an international competition to be held for the design of the fourth tower of the Absolute World complex. This competition was the first in over 40 years held by a private development group for a building in the greater Toronto area—not done since after the Toronto city hall competition.

Over 600 registrants and 92 submissions from architects in 70 countries participated. Of six finalist designs, the public voted on its preferred design, and in March 2007, Yansong Ma, founder of the MAD office architectural design firm, was announced as the winner.

I'm proud to share with this House that just six years later, Mississauga's Absolute World Towers 1 and 2 has been recognized for its innovative design and has been named as the world's best skyscraper of 2012.

## GLENGARRY FINE CHEESE

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I am proud to acknowledge Margaret Peters from my riding of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, whose hard work, skill and determination has achieved world-class recognition in the agri-food business. Brought up on a South Glengarry dairy farm and equipped with a bachelor of science in agriculture and food, Margaret opened Glengarry Fine Cheese on her family farm just north of Ancaster in 2008. It has established a name for quality specialty cheeses and has won countless awards across North America.

Many of you have already sampled some of her cheeses because they are often highlighted right here at Queen's Park at many of our events. Recently, Glengarry Fine Cheese entered two cheeses into the Frome agricultural society cheese show in England, which has judged cheeses for over 150 years as one of the oldest and most prestigious cheese fairs in the United Kingdom, gathering competitors from all over the world. Amongst thousands of entries from all around the world, Margaret's Lankaster loaf earned the title of global champion cheese, proving what local residents and countless lovers of Glengarry Fine Cheese products have known all along: We do produce the best cheese in the world.

The judges also awarded Glengarry Fine Cheese a bronze medal in the hard blue vein cheese class for their Celtic blue.

I congratulate Margaret on this great achievement and look forward to many more world-class awards. Congratulations, Margaret, and well done.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you, and, I suspect, samples all around.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

PROTECTION OF MINORS  
IN AMATEUR SPORTS ACT, 2013  
LOI DE 2013 SUR LA PROTECTION  
DES MINEURS PARTICIPANT  
À DES SPORTS AMATEURS

Mr. Ouellette moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 104, An Act to provide protection for minors participating in amateur sports / Projet de loi 104, Loi visant à protéger les mineurs qui participent à des sports amateurs.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement?

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** For the thousands of volunteers participating in sport and ensuring that we develop youth through the action of sports, whether it's coaching, managing, training, and all other aspects, there's always that one bad apple that spoils the entire bunch. Essentially, what this bill does is it requires background checks to ensure that those individuals who should be out there developing our kids are with kids.

## PETITIONS

## PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the privilege of being first.

"Whereas the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care plans to eliminate OHIP-funded physiotherapy services currently provided to seniors in retirement homes—and changing the current provider of the service as of August 1st, 2013; and

"Whereas last year the government spent \$110 million on physiotherapy for seniors in long-term care, but with the proposed changes this will decrease to \$58.5 million; and

"Whereas, instead of the 100 to 150 visits per year a senior may receive now from their dedicated, on-site OHIP physiotherapy staff, the change would mean a CCAC therapist would provide only five to 10 visits on-site only to seniors who are bedridden or have an acute injury; and



"Whereas this change not only reduces the funding available, but also moves funds from the lowest-cost provider (OHIP physiotherapy providers at \$12.20 per treatment) to the highest-cost provider (CCAC at \$120 per treatment); and

"Whereas these services are proven to help seniors improve in their activities of daily living, mobility, pain and fall risks;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To review and reverse the decision to eliminate OHIP physiotherapy services to seniors in retirement homes and continue with the provision of at least 100 treatments per year with a mechanism to access an additional 50 treatments, if medically necessary, with the current low-cost OHIP physiotherapy providers."

I'm pleased to sign and support this great petition from my riding.

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#### FAMILY CAREGIVER LEAVE

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to rise to bring a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

"Whereas the people of Ontario deserve to be able to look after their sick or injured family members without fearing that they will lose their jobs at such a vulnerable time;

"Whereas the people of Ontario deserve to be able to spend time looking for a child that has disappeared, or take time off to grieve the death of a child that was murdered without fearing that they will lose their jobs;

"Whereas the federal government has recently extended similar leaves and economic supports to federal employees;

"Whereas the government of Ontario, and the Premier of Ontario, support Ontario families and wish to foster mental and physical well-being by allowing those closest to sick or injured family members the time to provide support free of work-related concerns;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario pass and enact, during spring of 2013, Bill 21, the Leaves to Help Families Act."

I fully support the petition and give it to page William.

#### AIR QUALITY

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Ontario's Drive Clean program was implemented only as a temporary measure to reduce high levels of vehicle emissions and smog; and

"Whereas vehicle emissions have declined so significantly from 1998 to 2010 that they are no longer among the major domestic contributors of smog in Ontario; and

"Whereas the overwhelming majority of reductions in vehicle emissions is the result of factors other than Drive

Clean, such as tighter manufacturing standards for emission-control technologies; and

"Whereas the environment minister has ignored advances in technology and introduced a new, computerized emissions test that is less reliable and prone to error; and

"Whereas the new Drive Clean test has caused the failure rate to double in less than two months as a result of technical problems with the new emissions testing method; and

"Whereas this new emissions test has caused numerous false 'fails,' which have resulted in the overcharging of testing fees for Ontario drivers and car dealerships, thereby causing unwarranted economic hardship and stress;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"That the Minister of the Environment take immediate steps to begin phasing out the Drive Clean program."

I'm pleased to support this petition, affix my signature and send it to the table with page Taylor.

#### REPLACEMENT WORKERS

##### TRAVAILLEURS SUPPLÉANTS

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I'm pleased to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads:

"Whereas strikes and lockouts are rare: on average, 97% of collective agreements are negotiated without work disruption; and

«Attendu que des lois contre le remplacement temporaire des travailleurs existent au Québec depuis 1978 et en Colombie-Britannique depuis 1993, et les gouvernements successifs de ces deux provinces n'ont jamais abrogé ces lois; et

"Whereas anti-temporary replacement workers legislation has reduced the length and divisiveness of labour disputes; and

«Attendu que le remplacement temporaire des travailleurs pendant une grève ou un lock-out compromet le tissu social d'une communauté à court et à long terme ainsi que le bien-être de ses résidents;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to enact legislation banning the use of temporary replacement workers during a strike or lockout."

I agree with this petition, will affix my name and deliver it to the Clerks' table through page Kyle.

#### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Scarborough residents north of Ontario Highway 401 and east of Don Mills are without a rapid transit option; and

"Whereas a strong transit system is critical for increasing economic development and tackling income disparity; and

"Whereas this geographical area continues to grow and the demand for strong rapid transit continues to increase; and

"Whereas Sheppard Avenue is a major artery for automobile traffic for commuters travelling from suburbs to downtown Toronto, and travelling from suburb to suburb; and

"Whereas ground-level rapid transit would increase traffic, restrict lanes for automobiles, and add further risk for pedestrians and commuters at dangerous intersections along Sheppard Avenue; and

"Whereas demands for underground rapid transit along Sheppard Avenue have been part of public discourse for over 50 years; and

"Whereas the province of Ontario previously approved a plan from the city of Toronto to extend the Sheppard subway line from Downsview to Scarborough Centre; and

"Whereas an extension to the Sheppard subway line will require contributions and co-operation from the city of Toronto, the province of Ontario and the government of Canada;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To support the extension of the Sheppard subway line east to Scarborough Centre; and

"To call upon all levels of government to contribute multi-year funding for the construction and operation of an extension to the Sheppard subway line."

I fully support the petition and give it to Erica, the page.

#### FISHING AND HUNTING REGULATIONS

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the" Wynne "government has drastically reduced the number of Ontario hunting and fishing regulation booklets available to the public; and

"Whereas regulations in printed booklets are the most portable and convenient format for outdoorspersons to consult in the field, while hunting or fishing; and

"Whereas in addition to the Internet being unavailable in remote locations, many Ontarians do not have Internet access, or prefer information in print rather than electronic format; and

"Whereas those who hunt and fish pay substantial amounts each year to purchase outdoor cards, hunting licences and fishing licences and it is reasonable to expect that a booklet explaining the regulations should be provided as a courtesy; and

"Whereas Ontario hunters and anglers need to access the most current regulations to ensure" that anyone "hunting and fishing" can do so "safely and lawfully;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, ask the Ministry of Natural Resources to respect the wishes of Ontario

anglers and hunters by providing hunting and fishing regulations in a booklet format to everyone who needs one."

I affix my signature in full support.

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Jim McDonnell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Ontario ranks ninth of 10 provinces in terms of the total per capita funding allocated to long-term care; and

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care data shows that there are more than 30,000 Ontarians waiting for long-term-care placements and wait-times have tripled since 2005; and

"Whereas there is a perpetual shortage of staff in long-term-care facilities and residents often wait an unreasonable length of time to receive care, e.g., "for attending to "toileting needs; to be fed; to receive a bath; for pain medication," etc. "Since 2008, funding for 2.8 paid hours of care per resident per day has been provided. In that budget year, a promise was made to increase this funding to 4.0 hours per resident per day by 2012. This has not been done; and

"Whereas the training of personal support workers is unregulated and insufficient to provide them with the skills and knowledge to assist residents who are being admitted with higher physical, psychological and emotional needs. Currently, training across the province is varied, inconsistent and under-regulated;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

"(1) immediately increase the number of paid hours of nursing and personal care per resident per day to 4.0 hours (as promised in 2008);

"(2) develop a plan to phase in future increases so that the number of paid hours per resident per day of nursing and personal care is 5.0 hours by January 2015;

"(3) establish a licensing body, such as a college, that will develop a process of registration, accreditation and certification for all personal support workers."

I agree with this petition and will be passing it off to page Jasper.

#### HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I've received a number of petitions from the London area in support of Bill 79, paved shoulders on provincial highways. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas pedestrians and cyclists are increasingly using secondary provincial highways to support healthy lifestyles and expand active transportation; and

"Whereas paved shoulders on highways enhance public safety for all highway users, expand tourism opportunities and support good health; and

"Whereas paved shoulders help to reduce the maintenance cost of repairs to highway surfaces; and



"Whereas the member from Parry Sound-Muskoka's private member's bill provides for a minimum one-metre paved shoulder for the benefit of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That private member's Bill 79, which requires a minimum one-metre paved shoulder on designated provincially owned highways, receive swift passage through the legislative process."

I support this petition.

### SHALE BEACH

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ministry of Transportation closed public access to Shale Beach off Highway 26 in the town of Blue Mountains suddenly and with no consultation; and

"Whereas the closure will impact fisherman, swimmers and visitors who have been frequenting the beach for generations with no problem; and

"Whereas the closure will remove one of the only wheelchair-accessible fishing locations in the area; and

"Whereas the McGuinty-Wynne Liberal government won't let Ontarians enjoy anything for free anymore without implementing a new tax or a new fee;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Premier Kathleen Wynne and the Minister of Transportation immediately restore access to Shale Beach so that residents can continue to enjoy the beach and all that it has to offer for generations to come."

I certainly agree with this petition and I will sign it.

1330

### WIND TURBINES

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Auditor General confirmed that no comprehensive evaluation was completed by the" McGuinty-Wynne "government on the impact of the billion-dollar commitment of renewable energy on such things as net job losses and future energy prices, which will increase another 46% over the next five years; and

"Whereas poor decisions by the" McGuinty-Wynne "government, such as the Green Energy Act, where Ontario pays up to 80 cents per kilowatt hour for electricity it doesn't need and then must pay our neighbours to take it for free, and the billion-dollar cost of the seat-saving cancellation of the Oakville and Mississauga gas power plants, have contributed to making the cost of Ontario power the highest in North America; and

"Whereas there has been no third party study to look at the health, physical, social, economic and environmental impacts of wind turbines; and

"Whereas Ontario's largest farm organizations, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, have called for a suspension of industrial wind turbine development until the serious shortcomings can be addressed; and

"Whereas the" McGuinty-Wynne "government has removed all decision-making powers from the local municipal governments when it comes to the location and size of industrial wind and solar farms;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Liberal government support Huron-Bruce MPP Lisa Thompson's private member's motion which calls for a moratorium on all industrial wind turbine development until a third party health and environmental study has been completed."

I agree with this petition and will be signing it.

### AIR QUALITY

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the privilege.

"Whereas Ontario's new Drive Clean tests are recording higher-than-normal failure rates, even in cases where there is nothing wrong with a vehicle's emissions system; and

"Whereas this causes added inconvenience and higher costs for Ontario drivers; and

"Whereas in the case of pre-1998 vehicles, it is becoming increasingly difficult for owners to find an establishment that will provide the 'tailpipe' test for vehicles without the required on-board computer; and

"Whereas this provincial government has made no effort to reduce Drive Clean fees, even though the new Drive Clean test using a car's on-board computer takes less time and offers a more simplified testing process;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, ask the Ontario government take immediate action to correct the flaws in its Drive Clean testing program and also make an immediate commitment to phase out Drive Clean based on the consensus that this program has outlived its usefulness," as stated by the Auditor General of Ontario.

I'm pleased to sign and support this and give it to Ravicha, one of the pages.

### AIR QUALITY

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I want to thank Larry Moore of Tottenham for sending this petition to me.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's Drive Clean program was implemented only as a temporary measure to reduce high levels of vehicle emissions and smog; and

"Whereas vehicle emissions have declined so significantly from 1998 to 2010 that they are no longer among the major domestic contributors of smog in Ontario; and

"Whereas the overwhelming majority of reductions in vehicle emissions were, in fact, the result of factors other than the Drive Clean program, such as tighter manu-

facturing standards for emission-control technologies; and

“Whereas from 1999 to 2010 the percentage of vehicles that failed emissions testing under the Drive Clean program steadily declined from 16% to 5%; and

“Whereas the environment minister has ignored advances in technology and introduced a new, computerized emissions test that is less reliable and prone to error; and

“Whereas the new Drive Clean test no longer assesses tailpipe emissions, but instead scans the on-board diagnostics systems of vehicles, which already perform a series of continuous and periodic emissions checks; and

“Whereas the new Drive Clean test has caused the failure rate to double in less than two months as a result of technical problems with the new emissions testing method; and

“Whereas this new emissions test has caused numerous false ‘fails,’ which have resulted in the overcharging of testing fees for Ontario drivers and car dealerships, thereby causing unwarranted economic hardship and stress;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Minister of the Environment must take immediate steps to begin phasing out the Drive Clean program.”

I certainly agree with this petition, and I'm happy to sign it.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The time for petitions has expired.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

### CULTURAL DIVERSITY

**Mr. Monte Kwinter:** I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario should oppose any legislation that would restrict or prohibit people's freedom of expression and religion in public places and affirm that Ontario greatly values our diverse population and the social, cultural and economic contributions they make to help our society thrive.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Kwinter has moved private member's notice of motion number 42. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. Monte Kwinter:** It is with great pride that I rise today to speak about one of our province's greatest strengths: our diversity. This is such an important issue in my community, and because there is an ongoing national debate that has Ontarians concerned, I thought it would be an excellent opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to diversity.

Certainly, this debate has been sparked by Quebec's proposed legislation that, if passed, would ban all public

employees from wearing religious symbols such as turbans, hijabs, kippahs and crucifixes in the workplace. But this motion isn't about Quebec. This is about Ontario. This is about reaffirming our commitment to diversity. This is about bringing peace of mind to the people across our province who go to work each day wearing symbols of their religious background.

The goal of my motion is simple but important. It seeks to reaffirm our government's commitment to diversity and religious freedom in Ontario. I've been fortunate enough to live in Ontario for most of my life, and in that time I've seen our diversity flourish and grow. I've seen people from all across the world, people from all religions, move to our province and join our communities. According to the latest census data, this province is home to over 13.5 million people. Many come from different areas of the world, and our newcomers arrive from over 200 countries and speak more than 250 languages.

People come to Ontario because it's a great place to live, to work and to raise a family. But they also come because they know they will be greeted with tolerance and appreciation, and that their right of religious expression is not only protected; it's guaranteed. We are, after all, one Ontario. We do not divide ourselves along cultural, geographical or religious lines. I'm proud to say that our province and our country have a reputation throughout the world as a place where people can live together in peace, a place where cultural and religious differences are celebrated and not criticized.

But the unfortunate reality is that not every country is like this. Not every country protects the right of freedom of religious expression. As I speak here today, there are people in this world who can only dream about having the rights and the freedoms that we enjoy here. That's why people come to Ontario. That's why people come to Canada. And that's why this proposed legislation in Quebec has so many Canadians concerned.

For the people of Ontario, our diversity is a point of pride. We are proud of our Sikh population, our Hindu neighbours; we are proud of our Christian friends and our Muslim and Jewish brothers and sisters. But we're also proud of our rights and our freedoms. The people of Ontario are proud to live in a province where the freedom of religious expression is protected. There is a national debate going on right now on this subject. People have been calling our MPPs' offices asking what this message means for Ontarians. My intention is that this motion will bring peace of mind to a diverse population, to the people who go to work in government or publicly funded offices each day wearing religious clothing or other displays of diversity. I want the members of my community and communities across the province to know that the Ontario government feels our diversity is a strength that should be celebrated.

I first took notice of how passionately people in my riding felt about this issue earlier this month, during the Jewish High Holidays. While attending my synagogue, I spoke to many of my constituents, and a popular topic of



conversation was this proposed legislation in Quebec. As the members of this House may know, many members of Ontario's Jewish population once lived in Montreal. About 30 years ago they left due to the policies of the then provincial government in Quebec, and when I was speaking to these individuals, many of them were saying, "You see what they are doing in Quebec? It's a good thing we left when we did. It's a good thing that we came to Ontario."

1340

Other members of my community expressed concern. They were worried about the potential ramifications that such legislation would have for Ontarians. If religious expression is being targeted in our neighbouring province, could it happen here?

As a parent of four children, a grandfather to 10 grandchildren, an elected member of this province and a citizen of this great country, I would like to send a strong message to all Ontarians. This motion states that the government of Ontario would oppose any legislation that would restrict an individual's right of freedom of religious expression in public places. This motion reinforces that we are one Ontario. This motion will provide peace of mind not only to our diverse population, but to the many people across the world who one day hope to call Ontario home.

Since first tabling this motion, I have received a number of phone calls and emails of support. Speaker, I'd like to share a couple of these emails with the House.

This one says:

"Mr. Kwinter,

"I am not a resident of York Centre but I am writing to applaud your having introduced a motion to make it clear that Ontario does not support the Quebec charter of values.

"As Ontarians and Canadians, we need to stand up and make it clear that we oppose any legislation that undermines people's freedom of expression and religion in public places.

"Thank you for having taken this very important position in attempting to further identify Ontarians as people who foster a culture of inclusiveness."

Here's another one that I really liked:

"Dear Mr. Kwinter,

"I suggest the province post a huge sign on the border that reads 'Welcome to Ontario; come as you are.'"

These are just a few of the sentiments that I have been hearing, and I trust these are the sorts of sentiments that other MPPs are hearing as well. In fact, the member from Halton expressed these beautifully himself in a poem, and I understand he's going to be joining this debate and is going to deliver that poem again.

To conclude, I am so proud to live in Ontario. We are all so fortunate to live in a province where you can be who you want to be, a province where the role of the Ontario government is to foster a culture of inclusiveness, not one of division.

I'd like to echo the sentiments of Premier Wynne and our Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and say that

Ontario's diversity and freedom of expression and religion is a model to the world. Canada's diversity is a source of strength and pride, not weakness. As Premier Kathleen Wynne stated, "It's very important that Ontario is a diverse province, that our laws and our policies reflect that diversity. I believe that it is fundamentally one of our strengths."

Mr. Speaker, that's why I'm asking all MPPs from all parties to join me in reaffirming Ontario's commitment to diversity and support this motion. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** It's a pleasure and an honour to stand up today to comment on the motion from Monte Kwinter, the member for York Centre. It's a wonderful motion. It's a very positive motion in that it talks about what Ontario should do, not what other people should not do. That's a wonderful thing about this motion, I think.

It has, I think, inspired perhaps a tiny bit of movement in our sister province around their Charter of Quebec Values. Just in the last couple of days, there has been a bit of reporting in the paper that suggests that perhaps they would like to moderate their views a little bit. It needs a great deal of moderation, but the fact that they're starting in that direction—I thank the member for York Centre for his efforts on that behalf, and I think he's been responsible for some of that movement, so congratulations, Monte.

When I read my poem a week or so ago, it was very well received in the House, and it's gone—I don't know. The kids will tell you if it's gone viral or not. I'm not sure what that means, not being of that generation, but I've received a tremendous amount of comment on it and thanks for it.

I felt a little bit guilty because people have given me tremendous credit for this poem. It might not surprise many of my friends, but it might surprise others, that I didn't write it. I have a ghostwriter who wrote it for me, and I've got to give him credit because it's a tremendous poem.

Ben Ellis was an executive assistant of mine. We've stayed in touch over the years. Every once in a while when I read a poem, you'll know that it does come from Benjamin Ellis, who's currently living in Ottawa. This is the poem that Ben Ellis wrote:

An Ode to Freedom and Diversity.

In La Belle Province, they may dare

To tell you what you may not wear,

What symbols you may never bear

or what you can't put on your hair.

Muslims, Christians, Jews, beware!

You give the separatists quite a scare.

Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs, take care!

You are not welcome over there.

Ontario, thank God, need not despair

of such hateful laws or divisive hot air.

We are free in thoughts, free in prayers,

Free in expression and all private affairs.

We value our rights over laws doctrinaire

Our diversity gives us such richness and flair.  
When it comes to our faith, we say “laissez-faire”  
and follow the words of the wise man Voltaire.

Voltaire said once that, “Man is free  
the moment that he wants to be.”

In Ontario I'm glad to see

We don't forfeit rights so easily.

PC, Liberal and NDP,

I commend all three parties here before me

We may fight over details, but never shall we  
court voters that hate those who dress differently.

So say what you want, say it with ease

in English, Arabic, Greek or Chinese

Show us your faith, it's not a disease,

And wear whatever you damn well please.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate? The member for Bramalea–Gore–Malton.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Thank you to my colleagues as well. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I first would like to commend the member for taking on this initiative to raise awareness on this issue. It's something that deserves recognition, and it definitely receives my support and my thanks for raising this issue, so let's give him a round of applause too.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I think it's important in talking about this issue to take a step back and understand why the issue of religious freedom and expression is so important. In my opinion, it is one of the most important and valuable principles in democracy. It is essentially the root of freedom of thought, and in freedom of thought the other most cherished principle of democracy is the right to dissent. The belief that we can oppose the views of the government, we can think what we want, we can organize the way we want: These are some of the most fundamental rights we have as human beings. It's for that reason that an attack on our freedom of thought and expression, embodied in our religious beliefs, is so abhorrent, so troubling and so concerning.

If we truly believe as a democracy that we want to protect these cherished values, then we must see the inalienable connection between the right to think, the right to express and the right to believe in what you will. So this notion that in public areas, as we are seeing in the charter of rights and values that's being proposed by Quebec, we will, as a society, ban the practice of expressing your thoughts and your beliefs is very troubling. It's something that our charter has protected. Under section 2 of the charter, we have enshrined in the law of this land, in the law of Canada, that wherever you are, no matter what laws are enacted, the supreme law in Canada is the charter, and it has embodied a protection for your right to express yourself and your right to express your religion.

It's important to make it clear where we stand: that we certainly stand, as a province and as a nation, in support of these freedoms. In fairness, if we look at Quebec, Quebec itself is a divided province on this issue. It's not

the case that everyone in Quebec supports this notion. Many of our brothers and sisters in Quebec have raised an issue with the type of message this sends to people of diverse backgrounds and of various religious beliefs: This is not something that we stand for even in Quebec, let alone in Canada.

**1350**

While I support the spirit of this motion, and support the principle that we want to make it clear that here in Ontario we protect the rights of religious minorities and of religious expression, particularly in public places—that is a fundamental right we should indeed want to see protected—I think that what we need to do, though, to make that message even more strong, is to move beyond simply a motion that indicates our desire to protect these freedoms and move to some concrete protection.

I want to talk about three areas where we could actually make a strong impact—make a very meaningful impact—on protecting these rights. In Ontario, we actually are facing this problem—it exists in Ontario—where religious expression is impeded, where religious expression is banned in certain public spheres. We need to address that in our own homes, so that we can send a clear message that we support religious freedoms. In addition to a motion, let's actually have some concrete legislation that protects these freedoms.

One concrete example is in our courthouses. Courthouses—public, open courthouses—are a hallmark of democracy. In societies where we have a free and democratic society, we have the ability to go into a courthouse and see what's going on, to view democracy and view the rule of law at work.

In societies that are based on the rule of law, it is incumbent upon those societies to make sure that anyone can access a courthouse; that it's a place where the public can enter and actually see what's going on. Whether you're a participant because you are charged with an offence or you are a witness to an offence, whether you are a spectator who wants to see the way the law works in this country and this province, courthouses should be open and should be accessible.

In this province, those members of the Sikh faith who wear a kirpan are not able to enter the Brampton courthouse. That has a significant impact on their religious expression and their right to access a public space. It is a barrier to their ability to express their religion.

In Toronto, an accommodation has been made. That accommodation took years and years of courtroom battles through the human rights tribunal, and thankfully an accommodation was made that acknowledged that wearing your kirpan did not pose a threat to anyone's security. Given the multitude of items in a courthouse—the ready access to glass, to metal, to pens and pencils—the notion that carrying your kirpan would create any threat whatsoever was denied and rejected.

We see an accommodation made in Toronto courthouses, but there is no accommodation made in Ontario, broadly speaking. And in Brampton, where the majority of Sikhs reside, there isn't that accommodation. So this



issue still exists in our own province, and we need to take steps to improve that.

As a member of the NDP, I presented an amendment to the proposed law that would rescind the Public Works Protection Act and create a court security act. We as the NDP presented an amendment to the legislation that indicated that there should be an accommodation for religious symbols and articles of faith, as well as those with disabilities, to make sure they are accommodated in courthouses, so that we can ensure they are maintained in an open and accessible way. That is a meaningful way of protecting this right.

Muslim brothers and sisters, Hindu brothers and sisters in this society, Christians, the Jewish community, Zoroastrians, Buddhists: All these members of our society should be welcomed and not simply tolerated. When we have laws that say we will not impede your access to public spaces and we will protect your rights, that's going one step of the way. The next step, friends and members of this place, is that we need to make sure that people are not simply tolerated; they are accepted.

How do we move from tolerance to acceptance? The key step is that people know about each other. A great quote that I read is that the breeding ground for hatred is ignorance. If you have ignorance, ignorance leads to fear, and when you fear someone, you're likely to hate that person. Replace that breeding ground of ignorance with understanding or with knowledge, and knowledge leads to understanding and from understanding comes acceptance. If we are truly committed to this principle of ensuring the people in our society feel accepted and not simply tolerated, then we need to make sure that we take our responsibility seriously and ensure that people are educated about the various faith groups that exist, about their beliefs, about their culture, about what their principles entail, so that we can move away from this lack of knowledge, this ignorance that breeds the fear and the hatred, and move towards true understanding and acceptance.

If we're truly committed to protecting religious expression and freedom of thought, then we also have to look at our institutions and the fact that on the opposition side I am the only member of a visible minority—on the entire opposition side. In our Legislature, while I'm very, very encouraged by the fact there are members of visible minorities from Asian heritage, from South Asian heritage, from Caribbean backgrounds, from African-Canadian backgrounds—that's encouraging—we need to have more representation to make sure that our societies are not simply saying that we accept people, simply saying that we are multicultural and diverse, but we actually show it in a meaningful way in our institutions.

That's just political. In our private sectors, in our schools, in all of our institutions, our societies aren't representative of the communities that exist. Whether it's in school boards that are in communities that are quite diverse—the school board, whether it's the teachers or the principals, often doesn't reflect the members of that community. It's important to increase that representation

so that we really give credence to this belief that we support multiculturalism and diversity. We need to tear down the systemic barriers that exist, because those barriers create a real impediment to other communities from diverse backgrounds from actually accessing resources, from actually becoming a part of our society. We need to take some concrete steps to make that happen.

While this motion is significant in a response to clarify our position in Ontario, that Ontario is a place where we accept diversity and accept multiculturalism and plurality of religion, we need to go beyond that. So, friends, brothers and sisters, we need to move towards legislation that protects our rights. We need to move towards concrete steps of creating a climate of acceptance through education, through awareness campaigns, and we need to move towards a more representative society in which the systemic barriers that people face are torn down so that people from any background can be represented in society in every field, whether it's public or private.

One of the most troubling things I've seen as an elected official is the fact that racism and sentiments of hatred exist to this day in my society and across Ontario. In my community I can think of many examples where anti-Semitism is still alive and well, and it hurts me and troubles me that it still exists. We need to take steps to ensure that that no longer exists whatsoever. There's Islamophobia. There is a perpetual or an existing fear of members of the Muslim community, and we need to take steps to eradicate that fear and that prejudice. That goes with education. That comes with a campaign where we as leaders in our community take the steps to ensure that that's something that we do not accept, that we do not support, and that we need to be champions of creating a more accepting society.

As well, there are significant examples of racism against members of the South Asian community, including the members of the Hindu community in my riding, as well as Sikh members. There was recent vandalism of a Khalsa school, which is a school where there is a large percentage of Sikh students. There was vandalism and comments of a racist nature. So these are issues that exist, and we need more steps to move forward toward a society where we truly accept all people. We need to do that with concrete steps. So I acknowledge this motion and support it, but we need to move beyond that towards some real steps to protect our society. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** I applaud the member from York Centre for bringing forward this motion to affirm that Ontario greatly values its diversity. This motion is a timely motion in the face of the Quebec government's Quebec charter of values, which will bar people from wearing articles of faith. I will support this motion.

1400

Mr. Speaker, to me, diversity means respecting each other's freedoms in a civil society. Ontario's strength lies in its diversity. It not only enriches us socially, culturally and economically; it also connects us globally. Diversity in this province is about people, not about symbols. People from different parts of the world, with different cultural and religious backgrounds, have made Ontario their home and have greatly contributed to building this beautiful province.

Diversity is not a wooden ship. It is like a beautiful bouquet of flowers. Diversity in this province is what we embrace, and we respect and celebrate our differences. I see it every day in every walk of life in my riding of Mississauga—Brampton South. I see it in the schools, colleges, universities, playgrounds, hospitals, religious institutions and religious symbols, and in the private and public sectors.

Our government believes in one thing, where every person counts. Especially on the Liberal side of the benches, I'm very delighted to see that our caucus is very diverse. I have said it many times before, and I would like to reiterate it again: I'm proud to be part of a government that encourages its citizens to protect and promote their religion, culture and heritage.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I do appreciate the opportunity to speak to this motion and to congratulate and thank the member for York Centre for bringing it forward. It is an important issue and one that is certainly worthy of debate in this chamber.

In my current role as the citizenship and immigration critic and as the chair of the community relations committee for the Ontario PCs, I've met with hundreds of members from various communities across the province. Many chose Ontario for its inclusiveness and openness to all. Some left their countries due to the fear of persecution for beliefs or because of their religious values. Whether they belong to Sikh, Muslim, Christian, Jewish or Hindu families, all are proud to live, work and raise families in Ontario. Whether they wear a turban, a hijab, a kippah or a cross, they are contributing to our communities economically, socially and culturally.

Many people dedicate their lives to public service as police officers, nurses or working in our armed forces. They're running thriving businesses and contributing to our economy. They are actively involved in politics, helping us shape the direction of our province. In Brampton, the Civic Hospital's emergency wing was named after Guru Nanak Dev Ji, founder of the Sikh religion, after the Sikh community donated millions of dollars to the hospital. In Mississauga, Muslims have been taking on initiatives to help feed those less fortunate by organizing food drives during Eid. The Jewish community is actively involved in providing support programs for seniors and others. These are all invaluable contributions to our province.

I'm also very happy to see an initiative that has been launched by Lakeridge Health Corp. in Durham region. They have started a recruitment drive to promote recruitment and hiring health professionals in their hospitals in Oshawa, Whitby, Port Perry and Bowmanville. The poster reads, "We don't care what's on your head. We care what's in it." This slogan really showcases, I believe, what Ontario and Canada are all about. We fought long and hard for our rights, including the right to have freedom of religion. We've made significant strides in building a province that believes in unity and togetherness. As Ontarians, we all share the same values. We believe in giving back to our communities and helping those who are less fortunate. Divisive policies like the one proposed in Quebec hurt us as Canadians. It goes against the values we treasure as Canadians. Regardless of our religion, the colour of our skin, our sexuality, we are all one: We are Canadians.

Again, the PC caucus is proud to be supporting this motion, and we all must remember that Ontario is stronger when we're all together.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Vic Dhillon:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to speak on this very important issue. What we're doing here is making sure that Ontario opposes any legislation which would restrict wearing of religious symbols anywhere.

Like many of my colleagues, I too have received many calls from constituents who are worried, concerned, upset about what's happening in Quebec, and this bill is exactly what was needed to alleviate their concerns and put them at a peace of mind. I'm glad to know that all three parties have agreed to support this bill and will make sure that this does not happen here in Ontario.

If we weren't to agree with this bill, we would be sending a very negative message about Canada, which is a dream for many people across the world to live in, because we don't put up barriers in our differences. We celebrate our differences, we believe in tolerance and we make it a point to ensure that diversity is one of our greatest strengths.

What's happening in Quebec is they're targeting only a small percentage of their population, but this will be a huge injustice to most Quebecers. When this bill was introduced, I read a story in one of the papers about a Sikh doctor who was contemplating moving out of Quebec because this ban would not allow him to practise while wearing a turban. That's a huge injustice to his patients, because I'm sure he's built up a long history with them, treating them, knows their conditions, and it would be very unfair if he had to leave Quebec because of the restriction being imposed on his religious freedoms.

I want to reiterate what the member from York West stated in his press conference earlier this morning. He stated that this is an answer to a problem that doesn't exist. What Quebec is doing is a problem for me, I think it is a problem for this entire House, and we'll make sure,



by passing this motion, that we won't let this problem occur in Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** I'm happy to rise today to speak to the motion from the member from York Centre, which seeks a unified expression of opposition to the intolerant mindset of the Quebec charter of values. Before I do so, however, I would like to acknowledge my colleague from Halton and the fabulous commentary he offered last Thursday and again today during members' statements. That inspired comment was delivered in the form of rhyming verse. The all-party standing ovation that followed that poem was a memorable moment, and I believe we'll see that shared purpose here today.

I am very supportive of the motion from the member from York Centre and roundly reject the substance and spirit of the Quebec charter of values. That legislation's assault on individual rights and freedoms is a betrayal of this country's ideals and values.

The Ontario Progressive Conservative Party stands in opposition to any policy that aims to divide our society. The Ontario PCs also vigorously oppose any legislation that will restrict or prohibit an individual's freedom of expression. We don't believe that government should be making the choice for people about how they elect to display their faith publicly, as long as doing so respects the rights of others.

Wherever we sit on the political spectrum and wherever we live in this great province, I believe we can all agree that Ontario's diverse population is a great and wonderful thing. People have been immigrating to Ontario for centuries, and since the beginning, these newcomers have enriched our province with diverse cultures, fresh perspectives and a willingness to build a remarkable future.

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**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I'm really pleased to be able to speak today in support of MPP Kwinter's private member's motion. I really would like to echo the sentiments of so many of my colleagues in the Legislature, and I commend Mr. Kwinter for bringing this forward.

This motion, I believe, is one that all Ontarians can stand behind. I think our diversity in Ontario is a point of pride. It's something we brag about whenever we leave Ontario, and I think it's something that attracts people to Ontario. I guess I know that first-hand, being a former city councillor.

When I was first elected back in 1991, I would say the bulk of my riding was from Europe and they pretty much looked like I do. But over the last decade, things have changed tremendously; there has been huge growth. I would say at least half of my community, if not more, are now people who are South Asian in extraction, and they come from all parts of India.

They have only improved my community in such a dramatic way through their investments, through their

culture and through their philanthropy—one of the most generous groups I have dealt with. Whenever there is an emergency or any kind of chaos somewhere else in the province or anywhere else in the world, they are the first people who step forward, do fundraisers, send goods, send volunteers, and it's something I'm very proud to be a part of.

I think it's something that we as a province have embraced and see as a huge opportunity. We can do business with people in other parts of the world knowing that we have someone here who speaks that language and knows the cultural dynamics related to it. It only strengthens our province. So I know that the people of Brampton are proud of that diversity and the fact that it's been cultivated in this province.

We're also proud of the rights and freedoms we enjoy in Ontario and especially in Canada. For us, I think that means the freedom of religious expression. I don't think anybody in Ontario who knows how hard we worked to get those rights wants to take any chance of having them jeopardized. The ongoing national debate concerning this proposed prohibition of religious symbols and coverings in public places has certainly concerned people across Canada and around the world, and definitely the people in my diverse riding.

MPP Kwinter's motion demonstrates that Ontario values our diversity, and we think it should be celebrated and shouldn't be hidden. Our openness, our freedom of religion and, most importantly, our tolerance is why I think we have such a strong province. We are one Ontario. We are all Ontarian, no matter what race or what creed, wherever we come from in the world, and that's an important quality and a strength of our communities.

I believe Premier Wynne did state, "It's ... important ... that Ontario is a diverse province, that our laws and our policies reflect that diversity." As I said earlier, it is our strength. It's something that I think we believe to be of value. It is something that we hold in high esteem, because so many of us are immigrants from other countries, and we know how challenging it can be to come to this country. Knowing that Ontario is a safe place to live and work and raise your family is a strength we've worked very hard to deliver and to embrace, because we know that the ethnocultural texture of our province defines who we are.

It's also a continuous source of innovation and creativity and growth for this province. People who invest here see that as a strength, and we should capitalize on the richness of that diversity and the excitement and energy it brings to Ontario. The power of that diverse community to enrich and strengthen our communities, and particularly Canada, is part of our identity. It's something we're all very, very proud of.

Certainly in my community, I have been the beneficiary of having a strong South Asian community that helps me do my job and reminds me of what's important. I think we all have the same dreams and wishes at heart. We want to have strong, healthy families; we want them to go to school and get a good education;

we want to take care of our seniors. Part of that faith is what makes our families and our communities strong.

I think the member for Bramalea–Gore–Malton talked about the kirpan and how important that article of faith is, and I don't have the details in front of me but I know that Peel Regional Police felt it was important enough to make a policy so that they were allowed in courthouses in Peel. I think that isn't knowledge that is public as much as it should be, but I think it's something that certainly our chief of police felt was an important step to make in order to respect and to acknowledge the importance of that article of faith in our Peel courthouses. I commend Peel Regional Police for having taken that step and having done that important work of developing something public that demonstrates how important—and what value we place on that community.

I think this motion is about protecting the gains we've made in diversity and tolerance and ensuring that it is allowed to continue. I am very supportive of the effort that it took for my friend from York Centre to put this together. I think he has done an admirable job. I was at the press conference this morning, and I appreciate that he was thoughtful in his approach. He put a lot of effort into presenting a balanced approach for Ontario and reminding people that this is a safe haven. It's one where we respect all and that we want to provide that welcoming place for all Ontarians, no matter where they come from in the world.

I'm certainly pleased to support this motion, and I'm honoured to stand beside the member from York Centre.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure and actually an honour to speak as well to this motion put forward by the member from York Centre, Mr. Kwinter.

If you are just tuning in, the motion says that in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario should oppose any legislation that would restrict or prohibit people's freedoms of expression and religion in public places and affirm that Ontario greatly values our diverse population and the social, cultural and economic contributions they make to help our society thrive. I fully support this as well, and I should tell you that this is obviously in response to what's happening in Quebec.

In the early days when this was announced in Quebec, I was at the Hastings County Plowing Match and Farm Show. I was in our Conservative tent at the show, and I went and spoke to this gentleman who is a senior, who was sitting in our tent. He was shaking his head and he said, "Mr. Smith, I can't imagine that our province would bring in this kind of a piece of legislation." I said, "Well, I'm sure it's not our province."

I'm really happy to hear the comments being made on all sides of the House here today. This won't be happening any time soon in Ontario, what's happening in Quebec right now.

**Interjection:** Ever.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It won't be happening ever. You're right.

I'm proud, as all of us are, of our rich cultural history in Ontario, a province that originally was inhabited, of course, by aboriginals and made way for the subsequent waves of people from France and then Britain. In the area where I'm from, in Hastings and Prince Edward counties, Empire Loyalists fleeing the revolution settled and set the trend for those who would come after them, whether it was Irishmen fleeing the potato famine; the Underground Railroad; Ukrainians; Poles fleeing pogroms; Jews fleeing the Holocaust; or Italians seeking a safe place to escape from war.

Whether we're talking about the Irish Catholics or the Ukrainian Orthodox or the Jews or the Muslims or whoever we might be talking about, or this elderly gentleman who was in our tent that day—he said, "I just want to wear my hat that says 'Praise the Lord,' and I don't want to have somebody telling me that I can't wear that hat. And if they're going to take that hat, they're going to take my head with it," was basically what this gentleman said. We cannot have this type of intolerance anywhere in this country.

I was saddened, of course, to hear, as we all were, that Quebec has turned its back on these traditions of our common history. The strength of our province and the success of our future lie in our ability to embrace rather than to reject.

I've been proud to represent my caucus for the last two years on behalf of our leader, Tim Hudak, at events from Vaisakhi to Diwali. I walked in Nagar Kirtans right here in downtown Toronto and toasted the lunar new year in Markham and Richmond Hill, on behalf of our PC caucus.

As Canadians—and we are all Canadians here—we share similar values like tolerance. The mortar and brick of this country is the sweat and blood of every Catholic and Protestant, Jew and Muslim, Sikh and Hindu who came here to work and give their children a better way of life.

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As Ontario Progressive Conservatives, we know that our articles of faith are central to our cultural communities. In Ontario, you can wear the crucifix, the yarmulke and the turban in this Legislature with pride, and we will continue to do that well into the future.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for York Centre, you have two minutes for a response.

**Mr. Monte Kwinter:** I want to thank those who participated in this debate—first of all, the member from Halton; I sent him a note earlier today saying, "If you don't read that poem, I will," so I'm delighted that he did that—the members from Bramalea–Gore–Malton, Mississauga–Brampton South, Whitby–Oshawa, Brampton West, Burlington, Brampton–Springdale and Prince Edward–Hastings.

I would like to close with a quote, and this is from Charles Evans Hughes. Charles Evans Hughes was a former Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court, a former governor of New York and a former presidential



candidate who lost narrowly to Woodrow Wilson. He said, "When we lose the right to be different, we lose the privilege to be free."

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** We'll take the vote on this item at the end of private members' business.

FAIR AND OPEN TENDERING ACT  
(LABOUR RELATIONS FOR CERTAIN  
PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYERS IN THE  
CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY), 2013

LOI DE 2013 POUR DES APPELS  
D'OFFRES ÉQUITABLES ET OUVERTS  
(RELATIONS DE TRAVAIL CHEZ  
CERTAINS EMPLOYEURS DU SECTEUR  
PUBLIC DANS L'INDUSTRIE  
DE LA CONSTRUCTION)

Mr. Harris moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 73, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act, 1995 with respect to certain public sector employers in the construction industry / Projet de loi 73, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur les relations de travail en ce qui concerne certains employeurs du secteur public dans l'industrie de la construction.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Speaker, I'll never forget when I got that first call in January of this year. I wasn't expecting anything out of the norm, and of course I wasn't expecting to hear that a decision made by two individuals would affect every single person in the region of Waterloo, but that's exactly what I was about to hear. After answering the phone that afternoon, I was told by a local contractor that Waterloo region was about to become a closed shop. In other words, the region would be required to tender infrastructure work only to companies represented by a specific union.

My first reaction to this news was one simple and obvious question: How could this possibly happen? To my surprise, I was then told that on a Saturday in December of last year, two workers building a blue garden shed in Wilmot township had signed union cards with the Carpenters' Union. Because they had constituted a majority of the workers on the job site that day, they were able to file an application with the Ontario Labour Relations Board to certify the region as a construction employer. There was no local bargaining. There was no negotiating with the region. There was just an application to unionize the region under collective bargaining rules that were designed and only ever intended for construction companies. Now, if the labour board approves this application, the entire region will become locked into a collective bargaining agreement that will give one union a monopoly over regional infrastructure.

If you're wondering how any of this makes sense, trust me, you're not alone. This convoluted process raises more questions than answers. For example, why can two people set the infrastructure policy for an entire region? Or why do municipalities have absolutely no role in this collective bargaining process? Or why are collective bargaining rules for construction companies being applied to municipalities, as well as school boards, in the first place?

Well, for my speech, I would like to focus on the latter by highlighting the aims and the logic of my bill, Bill 73, the Fair and Open Tendering Act.

Over the summer, I've had the opportunity to travel across the province and to meet with municipal leaders and contractors to discuss Bill 73. Everywhere I go, I have found that everyone can agree that municipalities and school boards have a different purpose and mandate than construction employers. We all know that municipalities and school boards are not trying to make a profit like a business in the construction industry. Instead, they are trying to provide quality roads, bridges and buildings at the best possible value for taxpayers.

Unfortunately, when the Labour Relations Act was amended more than 35 years ago to introduce new collective bargaining rules for construction companies, the government forgot to make this very important distinction in law. The government set up province-wide collective bargaining for the industrial, commercial and institutional sector, or the ICI sector. At the time, it was assumed that everyone would recognize that this system was clearly designed only for the private sector and would be in no way applied to the public sector.

Well, we all know that assumption was wrong. Although the spirit of the law is clear, there is not a bright line distinguishing who is and who is not a construction employer. As a result, a loophole has been created within the Labour Relations Act. That loophole has been repeatedly exploited by certain unions to subject municipalities and school boards to collective bargaining rules for construction companies operating in the private sector. Even if the work being performed is as simple as putting together a garden shed, a municipality can be declared a construction employer and lose its ability to openly and fairly tender infrastructure contracts to all qualified contractors.

To date, several public sector employers have fallen victim to this legal loophole, including Hamilton, Kitchener, Toronto, Sault Ste. Marie and the Greater Essex County District School Board. This has happened at great expense to the taxpayers. The reason is that once a municipality or school board is unionized under these rules, they become bound to a collective bargaining agreement that is negotiated at a provincial level by construction companies and unions for construction companies.

That means that municipalities and school boards can become bound to a collective bargaining agreement that they had nothing to do with. What's worse is that these agreements include strict subcontracting-out restrictions that force local officials to hand over a monopoly on

publicly funded projects to build new bridges, water treatment facilities and public buildings to just one union.

Now, you don't need a degree in economics to understand that when there's little to no competition, prices will go up. Just consider what happened in Hamilton: After the city was certified by the carpenters' union in 2005, costs soon went up. At first, city staff pegged the increase at just 5%, while the carpenters argued it was only 2%, but a consultant retained by the city soon determined that costs had actually increased by as much as 40% and rose even higher in some cases. For example, the first waste water treatment project tendered after the city was certified came in 83% over budget, or \$24 million more than expected.

In 1998, our party tried to solve this problem by creating a process for municipalities and school boards to apply at the labour board to become a non-construction employer. If approved, this status would free a public sector employer from a labour monopoly, but unfortunately the process hasn't worked out the way it was intended to. In fact, no municipality has ever been designated as a non-construction employer by the labour board.

Clearly, the system is broken, especially since 70% of qualified contractors in closed-shop municipalities are excluded from working on publicly funded infrastructure. They're excluded just because they don't hold the right union card or they have chosen not to hold one at all. Now, can anyone say that this practice is fair? Of course not. Discriminating against qualified contractors on the basis of who they have chosen to associate with is patently unfair, and it's unacceptable.

So, to correct this situation and restore fairness, all we need is clarity in Ontario's labour laws, and that's what my bill, the Fair and Open Tendering Act, would offer. If passed, Bill 73 would add a very clear definition to the Labour Relations Act for public sector employers that would exempt municipalities and school boards from the province's collective bargaining rules for the construction industry. By making this legislative change, we would save Ontario taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars every year by preserving and restoring the ability of municipalities and school boards to openly tender contracts for large infrastructure projects.

More importantly, we would reinstate the rights of qualified contractors who have been unfairly barred from working on public infrastructure in cities like Hamilton and Sault Ste. Marie. Because Bill 73 would exempt municipalities and school boards from the construction sections of the act, I took great care to ensure that the bargaining relationship between workers and their employers would be preserved.

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My bill does this by transitioning the relationship from the construction sections of the Labour Relations Act to the industrial sections of the act. If municipal employees still choose to be affiliated with the Carpenters' union, they would be able to do so under my bill, but only sections 1 to 125 of the act would apply. Carrying out

this transition falls well within the purview of the province's constitutional authority to shape the bargaining structure for its workers and it protect workers' freedom of association under 2(d) of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Divisional Court, the Ontario Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada have all established the precedent which provides the legal foundation for my bill.

Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin pointed out as much in *Ontario v. Fraser* when she said, "The Ontario Legislature is not required to provide a particular form of collective bargaining rights.... The affirmation of the right to collective bargaining is not an affirmation of a particular type of collective bargaining.... What section 2(d) protects is the right to associate to achieve collective goals ... not a particular process or result."

In a lengthy legal opinion, which I gave to all members of the House, Mark Freiman, a Lerner's law firm lawyer, points out that case law precedent and Supreme Court jurisprudence establish that Bill 73 is, in fact, constitutional.

Given the sound case for the proposal and the added provision to protect workers' rights, I think it's quite clear Bill 73 is not a union or a non-union issue. It is truly an issue of fairness—fairness for municipalities, for contractors, for workers and, ultimately, for taxpayers. Because of this balanced and fair approach, Bill 73 has won the support of unionized contractors, construction associations and municipalities across the province.

In fact, Bill 73 has been officially endorsed by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. So I would like to thank AMO president Russ Powers for the endorsement and for being with us here today. I appreciate your support both in your role at AMO and as a Hamilton city councillor when you voted to support open tendering.

Now, we have heard some fear-mongering from a different Hamilton city councillor who unfortunately doesn't really understand this issue. He has made some demonstrably false statements about Bill 73 this summer, to the detriment of his constituents.

So I would just like to caution members of the opposite side, listening to one lone voice while ignoring the voice of 440 municipalities. I think it would be a tragic mistake to accept the comments of one misinformed councillor at the expense of alienating and undermining hundreds of municipalities, thousands of contractors and millions of hard-working Ontarians.

Let me be clear: Members opposite can stand with one councillor or with the entire municipal community which includes the mayors and regional chairs of Ontario and the Large Urban Mayors' Caucus of Ontario.

I hope every member of this Legislature agrees with our municipal colleagues because, at a time when the province is facing a \$60-billion infrastructure deficit, we need to do everything in our power to stretch our infrastructure dollars as far as possible. So I'm asking all members of this House to take a stand for taxpayers today and vote in favour of Bill 73. Thank you for your time.



**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** When first approached by the member from Kitchener–Conestoga about the certification issue and his private member's bill, I genuinely felt that he was looking to solve a local problem. But upon further investigation and research, the bill revealed itself to be quite problematic.

This is a reactionary and premature bill that will create more problems than it solves. It is unfortunate that the member from Kitchener–Conestoga has crafted a bill that tramples and undermines current existing collective agreements in Toronto, Hamilton, Sault Ste. Marie and the Windsor–Essex school board, deliberately making it impossible for us to support.

The last time this Legislature tried to tear up existing collective agreements, we were talking about Bill 115. The mess that that process—supported by the Liberals and the PCs at the time—created is ongoing, and the resolution through the court system will be costly to every Ontarian.

Just as we stood against the draconian legislation of Bill 115, which, like this bill is attempting to do, undermined existing contracts, this legislation would effectively render the current municipal—and one school board—master agreements, collectively bargained, fairly bargained with the building trades in Toronto, Hamilton, Windsor, Essex, and Sault Ste. Marie, null and void.

Instead of proposing exemption options for municipalities and perhaps reviewing the current system, this legislation uses a hammer when careful consideration is required. The fact that the entire Ontario construction trades sector strongly opposed this bill and that the construction contractors in the Kitchener–Waterloo region are split suggests that this bill is not the answer to a very complex situation.

While in principle there are valid arguments pro and con as to whether municipalities should be considered construction employers under the Ontario Labour Relations Act, Bill 73 is a badly constructed piece of legislation which is premature. This matter is still before the Ontario Labour Relations Board. No decision has been made under the relevant sections of the act. What is needed is an objective and thoughtful look at the process and consideration potentially for modernization by an objective and respected voice, perhaps like Harry Arthurs.

To suggest that costs will go up by hundreds of millions of dollars is false. The numbers cited don't add up. I realize it may very well be too late to inject some facts into this story, but it is worth trying.

Please note that an exhaustive city of Toronto report on the possible impact of going non-union estimates savings at 1.7%, and that's assuming that the savings would be passed on to the city by a lower bid. This report is a staff report, Labour and Training Costs in Construction Procurement, 2007. It is a matter of public record. The Toronto report is by far the best evidence-

based study on this issue, but of course it is not referenced by the member from Kitchener–Conestoga.

While the PC Party would like to tear up existing collective agreements, we feel strongly that negotiating contracts on the floor of the Legislature comes with a cost. We have processes in place in this province, and one is playing out at the Ontario Labour Relations Board right now. When we ignore the processes that we have previously agreed to, we end up creating problems, not solving them.

In this place, in this House, we need to be talking about the problems facing Ontarians and coming up with solutions to those problems. I hear from my constituents about how we can create more and better jobs in Ontario, how we can build a stronger, more effective health care system, and how we can implement changes to make life more affordable for people feeling the squeeze in this province. This bill has been used to divide rather than unite in a common cause. It is ironic that the member referenced fear-mongering in his comments.

In summary, Bill 73 is like using a sword to do surgery, which will significantly alter existing labour relations in this province. It is not the solution, but I remain open to exploring options that could modernize what everyone would agree is an overly complex system of province-wide master agreements, a function of countless legislative and collective bargaining compromises going back many decades.

To suggest that this private member's bill is a panacea and/or a solution to how provincial master agreements are struck is false. Legislation is premature. The matter is still before the Ontario Labour Relations Board, and it would be premature to legislate on this issue. The last time this assembly opened collective agreements on the floor of this Legislature, we paid the price: We compromised trust. In this House and in this process, I would urge the members of this House to not support Bill 73.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Hon. David Zimmer:** It's my pleasure to join in this debate. First of all, I'm going to try to distill very simply what I understand is the intent of the bill and then tell you why I think it's a bad thing.

It's a short piece of legislation, only two pages long, but there are a couple of difficult concepts to understand here. I think if we get our heads around those two or three basic concepts, then right-thinking people will vote the right way, which is to vote against it.

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It's passing strange that today the member opposite—the PC Party—is bringing this legislation forward, and it's designed to do this: Right now, there is a provision for province-wide bargaining in certain municipalities and school boards for the construction industry in Ontario. So the construction trades hammer out a contract, and it applies to all the municipalities and all the school boards. That's the way the law stands today. This bill is designed to change that law to say that province-

wide bargaining in the construction industry does not apply across the board in the public sector throughout Ontario, but it should be left up to individual municipalities or individual hospitals or other public institutions to say, "We want to opt out of the province-wide agreement." So those are the two choices: province-wide agreement and a bill that is designed to let everybody in the public sector opt out, if they want.

Now, what's really interesting is that the legislation the member opposite's bill is trying to attack is legislation that the Conservative government brought in in the year 2000 and then refined a little later while they were still in power. In effect, they brought in the bill and then brought in some amendments to make it even stronger, so that there was province-wide bargaining in the construction trades with public sector entities—hospitals, school boards and so on.

It's passing strange that here we are—we've been in government 10 years—10 years later. Their legislation has been in place. They brought it, they introduced it in the year 2000, we've lived with it through their years and through our years, and now they want to amend it. They say this is necessary because there are some hospitals, some municipalities and other public sectors that want to opt out of these province-wide agreements in the construction trades.

But here's the rub: The provision to opt out of these province-wide agreements already exists. I take the example of the member opposite, from the riding of Kitchener-Conestoga. Take the city of Kitchener. Frankly, I don't know what the situation is there, but let's take the example that the city of Kitchener wants to opt out of the province-wide agreement regarding construction contracts that the city of Kitchener is engaged in; they don't want to be a part of that province-wide bargaining regime. There is provision in the Ontario Labour Relations Act, and in other legislation, where the city of Kitchener can come down to Toronto, file an application before the Ontario Labour Relations Board and say, "We, the city of Kitchener, do not want to be part of across-the-board public sector construction; we don't want to be caught by these broad agreements."

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, if you wish to heckle, I would ask you to sit in your seat.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** Then, what the Ontario Labour Relations Board quite fairly and quite properly says to the city of Kitchener, because this is its job: "All right. The existing regime is that these collective agreements involving the construction trades and municipalities, hospitals and other public sector things apply across the board province-wide. But if you tell us why and it's a good argument, and it makes sense and meets some other criteria, we will give you permission to opt out." That's what the city of Kitchener could do: come down, make the application, make their argument why they want to opt out—the trade union would probably make the argument why they should not be allowed to opt out—

and the independent members of the Ontario Labour Relations Board would hear both sides of the argument and make their decision: "Yes, Kitchener, you can get out," or, "No, Kitchener, you can't."

That provision exists for every municipality, every hospital and every public sector entity that has to deal with the construction trades. So I scratch my head on one side, I scratch my head on the other side and I say, "Why is the member bringing forward this bill, because what he wants to achieve by this bill is already possible in the Ontario Labour Relations Act?" So it doesn't make any sense. I can only suspect that there is some local political issue there that the member is trying to deal with.

In short, this is a piece of legislation that is unnecessary because what the member is trying to achieve by the legislation is already possible under the act. All the municipality or the hospital or the other public sector entity has to do is make an application to the Ontario relations board, make an argument why they should be opted out, let the construction trade respond why they shouldn't be opted out, and the independent members of the Ontario Labour Relations Board will decide the issue.

Members of the Ontario Labour Relations Board are made up of representatives from the private sector, the union sector, the public sector and so on. They usually strike these panels—it might be a panel of three labour relations board members. It might be someone—typically they have someone representing the private sector, they have someone representing the public sector and they have someone representing the union sector. They'll hear the arguments and they'll make their decision.

So, this is a piece of legislation—with this provision to go to the Ontario relations board and make an argument to opt out—that is something that the Conservative government brought in. They brought it in because they thought that was the fair way to do it: province-wide agreements for the construction trades in all the public sector and municipalities, with a provision that any municipality or public sector entity has a mechanism to opt out.

I just stand to be corrected; I gave the wrong date there. The original legislation was brought in by the Conservative Party in 1998. They brought the original legislation in in 1998 and they refined it and amended it in the year 2000.

So I ask why, after all these years, they suddenly want to wreck a piece of legislation that has worked well across the province. It has got that safety provision in it that it is possible to opt out of it. So I say to my friend opposite from Kitchener-Conestoga: If your municipality wants to opt out of it, if they're the ones that are encouraging you to bring forward this private member's bill, you should go to them and refer them to the Ontario Labour Relations Act. I'll dig up the section number and the subsection numbers. I'll even give you some case law on it, and you can take it in a folder, give it to them and say, "Go to the Labour Relations Board and make your application to opt out, because that's what the safety mechanism is for."



**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** As the Ontario PC critic for municipal affairs and housing, I'm pleased to have a few moments to speak about Bill 73. I first want to commend the member for Kitchener–Conestoga for the tremendous amount of work that he has done prior to bringing this legislation forward.

In the finest traditions of this place he has identified a long-standing problem facing municipalities and school boards across the province, and he has drafted a very reasonable bill, I suggest, to deal with those issues. Open tendering gives municipal councils the tools to ensure that they can go out and get the best possible price for infrastructure projects.

I'm so proud to stand in support of this bill, which protects local taxpayers by giving them the highest quality and the best bang for the buck. But my colleague has done much more than that prior to bringing this excellent bill forward. I'm so proud at how he has worked to reach out to municipalities and school boards to earn their support, and it's this tremendous amount of support that he has received from those municipal leaders in every corner of the province that I'm going to focus my comments on today.

1450

It's important, as legislators, that we listen to our municipal partners. What the member has done today with this legislation is really something that I suggest the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing should have done, as she was out having a conversation with our municipal leaders. If she'd done that, then I think she would have been able to walk across to the Minister of Labour and get those reforms that the member has proposed into a bill. But I did notice that we've got some good news that perhaps we can get both those ministers on the record today. I saw the minister over in the west members' gallery speaking to the AMO president. I hope he talked some sense in to you, Minister, and I hope you will support this legislation.

The member for Kitchener–Conestoga did have a meeting at the AMO conference regarding Bill 73. I had the pleasure of attending that meeting and met with a number of municipalities about the subject. I can tell you, Speaker, that mayors and councillors across this province spoke in the hallways at AMO and spoke very favourably of that.

Speaker, I don't want you to take my word for it. I want to put some comments on the record. I mentioned AMO, and I want to quote the letter from Russ Powers, the AMO president, who is here with us in the west members' gallery. I might want to remind members that AMO represents the 444 municipal governments that are in the province. This letter says:

"Dear Mr. Harris,

"At its August board of directors meeting, the AMO board supported a private member's bill that you tabled....

"Municipalities should be able to tender construction work in a free and open competitive environment to gain the most value for construction expenditures.

"We agree with your approach.... Thank you for recognizing the fiscal constraints under which municipalities operate and for tabling this bill."

That's a pretty resounding letter of support, and I'm far from finished with the endorsements.

MARCO, the Mayors and Regional Chairs of Ontario, of single-tier cities and regions, endorsed a motion supporting Bill 73 in a letter. MARCO chair and Waterloo region chair Ken Seiling writes, "We wish to emphasize that this is not a question of being anti-union. Rather, it is a question of what best serves the public interest....

"Given the substantial number of capital works projects undertaken of municipalities in Ontario every year, the implications are staggering. Our concern is that the cost escalations resulting from this situation may very well delay the implementation of key infrastructure projects that are critical to Ontario's economic success."

You know, Speaker, I could go on and on, but I have to wrap up in a few moments. Let me just give you a list of some supportive municipalities, including LUMCO, the Large Urban Mayors' Caucus of Ontario; cities like Hamilton, Kitchener, Stratford, Woodstock; the towns of Orangeville, Kirkland Lake, Penetanguishene; as well as committees at the regions of Waterloo and Niagara. Municipalities recognize that reforming the Labour Relations Act in the manner set out in Bill 73 is a critical part of addressing our infrastructure needs in the province.

Yes, we do need funding for these projects, but we also require a level playing field that ensures that every penny is spent wisely. Bill 73 does it. Again, I want to commend the member for Kitchener–Conestoga, and I want to encourage every MPP to support Bill 73.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate? The member for Essex.

**Mr. Rob Leone:** He's going to vote yes.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** No, I am not going to vote yes, as many of my colleagues to the right of me would probably have already guessed. But I do appreciate all the comments.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I do, and I wear it proudly. Maybe that's the perspective that has not been brought to this debate today that I hope to offer members in the gallery and my colleagues here in the House: the perspective of the worker.

Prior to being elected in this House, I was and still am a proud card-carrying member of the Laborers International Union of North America, a construction worker. I worked in the heavy sector for about 10 years. I worked on the roads and bridges and sewers and water mains and in the ditches—a great field of work. I was proud of the work that I did and accomplished. To this day, whether it's a municipal project or a provincial

project, when we go over those projects, I tell my kids, "Daddy worked on that bridge," and I enjoyed it.

What that did for me was it afforded me, really, a wonderful living. It afforded me the ability to be married, to buy our first home, to raise two kids, to purchase vehicles and to make ends meet.

Now, the workers that sign a card to become unionized: They don't do that arbitrarily, Mr. Speaker—at least the ones who did that prior to me coming on board—to ensure that the company that I worked for was signatory to a union. They made a conscious decision to elevate, to raise, the standards of their working conditions. They knew that within that jurisdiction, within that scope of work, there was a fair wage that they should be compensated by.

This goes to the heart of the debate: that we have unions in this country, we have legal representation and the right to be represented by a collective agreement and by a bargaining unit. And those rules have never changed and will never change—I hope, I trust. That's one of the reasons why I do not think that this House should intervene in that long-standing, well-nuanced process.

Now, I certainly have some compassion for municipalities. The member from Kitchener—Conestoga had mentioned that there are 440 that are supportive, and I can imagine why. The massive amount of downloading that has happened historically to municipalities, whether in social services or infrastructure needs, has created such an enormous burden that municipalities would be scratching at every opportunity to save a nickel there or a dime here. Yet, the argument put forward by my friend the member from Kitchener—Conestoga is not one that is convincing. By and large, in the aggregate, union contractors are competitive with non-union contractors. They're doing the same scope of work. The margins on these jobs are really not that wide. So when the member mentions that in—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Member from Renfrew, forgive me for speaking while you were interrupting. I'll continue on in my speech, but I certainly extended the same courtesy—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, this is your last warning. I have asked you to relocate to your seat if you're going to heckle. I would just like to carry on business.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Thank you, Speaker. I certainly didn't mean to get him in that much trouble. I quite often enjoy the interjections by the member.

Needless to say, some of the facts that he presents almost sound like an infomercial. I had to scratch for that word. It really sounds as though, "If you get rid of or dismantle this collective agreement right now, things are going to be cheaper across the board, day one." That is implausible. He has no facts or figures to back that up. In fact, what he is quoting, I believe—I will quote him: "As soon as closed tendering began in Hamilton,

infrastructure costs spiked by as much as 40%," Mr. Harris said at the Construction House of Hamilton." What Mr. Harris was referring to, I believe, was the Ivor Wynne Stadium project with Infrastructure Ontario for the Pan Am Games 2014.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** He's saying, "No," but these are the facts that are related to your comments. The original staff and aldermen had confirmed that \$80 million of the Ivor Wynne Stadium was approved. Infrastructure Ontario was not satisfied that the renovations to the existing structure would be sufficient and they decided to build a brand new stadium which was estimated at \$140 million. So of course, when you're using ambiguous facts like that, it's going to sound like an infomercial: 40% more. Well, in fact, Mr. Speaker, it was a totally different scope of project. It's not fair to make that comparison.

Ultimately, I understand. Again, back to the constraints that municipalities and school boards have these days. It's well known. We debate those issues in this House each and every day. One of the requirements for a healthy community and healthy municipality is a good base of good-paying jobs to contribute to the tax base of that municipality. What I've seen in this House is a valiant attempt not only by the Conservatives—it's in your DNA; it's something that you're preprogrammed to do, ideologically driven, and I get it. That's why we get along sometimes. I get you; you get me; we get where we're coming from—but joined by the Liberals. We've seen a bill come through this House similar in its intent to dismantle or circumvent a collective bargaining agreement between EllisDon and several building trades. That's going to happen; you're going to do that. But today, they're going to say, "We're not helping with you this one." Tomorrow, they're going to say, "We'll help you with Bill 74," as you did—and a piecemeal approach with Bill 115, to circumvent the bargaining rights of teachers in this province.

1500

In this party, the New Democratic Party, we don't make a habit of doing that, and we're not going to start now, because the equation that you're—

**Interjection:** Social contract.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** The social contract was a guy named Bob Rae, and if I'm not mistaken, he's on your team and should have always been on your team.

I want to tell you that—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Order.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** When the social contract was enacted, I was 13 years old. I've grown up since then. I would hope the two other parties would have grown up since then as well, and understand that you can't continue to bash the workers in this province and expect any menial increase in our quality of life. You can't do it. Stop doing it. You're going to continue to do it, but we're telling you here that you're making a mistake.



We proved that you made a mistake with the teachers. This, again, is a cautionary tale, a slippery slope that I would caution members before embarking on.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Why is this debate happening here in the Legislature and not before the Ontario Labour Relations Board? The answer comes down to one word and just one word, and that word is “ideology.” The fact of the matter is that this is just another piece of right-wing union-bashing. This is just part of the right-wing agenda to see what they can do to take apart unions in the province of Ontario.

The member for Kitchener-Conestoga, as my colleagues have explained, has made no case for why we need Ontario-wide legislation to hammer away at an issue that hasn’t even been resolved within the Ontario Labour Relations Board. Why don’t you leave it to the Ontario Labour Relations Board? The so-called solution would have the effect of imposing a Wild West legal status on province-wide labour agreements, and the member offers up a case that a matter before the Ontario Labour Relations Board may be imbalanced, thus trying to pre-empt the Ontario Labour Relations Board. However, he doesn’t offer any solutions using the existing remedies that, the member from Willowdale pointed out, exist aplenty.

His solution basically says that if his type of thinking and his party have their way and you get unionized—while today they say “construction,” tomorrow it could be anything and everything—if you get unionized, you can simply just opt out. I just don’t think that’s much of a solution. If you’ve got a problem with whether a particular agreement is balanced, then resolve it using the tools available to you at the Ontario Labour Relations Board. This is somewhat similar to saying, “Why don’t we just use a paint roller?” when what you really need is an edging brush.

This is a government that does believe in fair and balanced labour negotiations. The fact of the matter is that when you’re bargaining a collective agreement, the parties are free to negotiate terms that do restrict the employer to contract only with unionized employees. However, if a party feels they should not be bound to a province-wide collective agreement, then they have the options that the member from Willowdale set out very clearly.

Speaker, this is not the answer to any problem. This is just an expression of right-wing ideology, and I’m urging members to vote against it.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** There are only a couple of points I want to make here. One: This is not about ideology at all. This is about fairness and it’s about what’s right and what’s wrong.

Is it right to treat municipalities—who build bridges, provide public service, and do it all at taxpayer expense—that they’re treated the same way as for-profit

construction companies? It certainly is not, and it was never intended that that would happen. But the result of making that happen costs millions and millions of dollars. I know at the city of Toronto alone it’s been estimated that we lose \$100 million a year because of limited tendering.

I’ll make my point quite quickly here. If the people on that side of the room over there were the only ones in this room that could bid—if we were all contractors and all of a sudden only those people could bid—are we going to get the best prices? We’re not, because certainly someone on this side at some occasion is going to have a better price than those people. But because we don’t get the benefit of that, the taxpayers have to pay more.

This is only about saving and protecting tax dollars. This is a way for the province of Ontario to help municipalities cut their costs without reducing service and without spending any tax dollars to do it. It makes common sense, and if you people can’t see it, I don’t know what the heck is wrong with you.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** It’s a pleasure to rise in the House as the PC labour critic to support my colleague’s bill, Bill 73, the Fair and Open Tendering Act. This is a government—and we’re seeing it again today—supported by the NDP, that refuses to ensure that public infrastructure contracts are negotiated in a fair and unbiased way. That is something that my colleague’s bill is seeking to remedy.

A fair, open tendering process will ensure that projects are being funded as efficiently as possible, allowing municipalities and school boards to undertake additional projects, creating even more jobs for the people of this province. Of course, I don’t need to remind anyone in this House that we have nearly 600,000 men and women today out of work, so it is vitally important that we make changes to allow companies and businesses to hire more people and to start growing our economy.

Recently, the London and District Construction Association conducted a month-long vote which culminated with their endorsement of this bill. The London and District Construction Association covers all aspects of the industry, from suppliers to contractors, and both unionized and non-unionized workers. The result of their vote was a unanimous show of support for this important bill today. What the LDCA said was that for public infrastructure projects, the process should be opened up to as many contractors as necessary to get the best price and best value for Ontario taxpayers. As the member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore said, this is total common sense.

This bill is about making sure that hard-earned tax dollars are spent wisely. It is about making sure that we, as elected representatives, put in place the framework to build an open tendering system that gives more contractors the right to bid for public infrastructure jobs. The unnecessary red tape that is inherent in our labour laws and costing us jobs will be reduced by removing the

barriers from contractors that they're facing when attempting to offer their services to the public sector. A government that truly wants to see a stable and prosperous Ontario would know that removing these barriers and streamlining the process for contractors—getting behind Ontario workers instead of standing in their way—must be a top priority.

I am pleased to join with the member from Kitchener-Conestoga today to support this bill. I hope that all members will make sure that job growth, fairness, transparency and efficiency will be a top priority in this House when we are making decisions.

I know that I am supporting this bill because my constituents in Lambton-Kent-Middlesex have told me loud and clear that they are tired of having their tax dollars wasted, spent ineffectively by the McGuinty-Wynne-Horwath government. This is just a government—again, supported by the third party—that is refusing to put forward good ideas. In fact, they are holding back important infrastructure projects here in the province of Ontario. I encourage all members—hopefully the third party will have a rethink before the vote shortly.

I'm proud to support this.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate? The member for Kitchener-Conestoga, you now have a total of two and one.

**Interjection:** Three-thirty-five.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Three-thirty-five? All right. Thank you, Speaker.

I'd like to thank the comments from my colleagues, but I will especially thank those on this side of the House who have stood up for the public purse and taxpayers today: Steve Clark, our municipal affairs critic; Doug Holyday from Etobicoke-Lakeshore, former deputy mayor of Toronto; and, of course, our new labour critic, Monte McNaughton.

1510

Speaker, the reactionary responses by my honourable colleagues are both over the top and misinformed. I am saddened and deeply disappointed to see that certain members have resorted to fear-mongering and a deliberate campaign of misinformation.

For the record, Bill 73 does not tear up any collective bargaining agreements. It would simply transition the collective bargaining relationship from the construction sections of the Labour Relations Act to the industrial sections of the act. In other words, it would remove municipalities and school boards from existing province-wide agreements that apply to construction companies and require that public sector employers negotiate contracts with their workers under sections 1 to 125.

As my honourable colleagues should have realized after reading the lengthy legal opinion I provided them with, it is well within the purview of the province to shape the bargaining structure for workers. With all the due diligence done on this bill, I find it unbelievable that any of the members opposite could be confused with its contents. In fact, when I met with the member for Kitchener-Waterloo, I would have been happy to take

into consideration any of her suggestions, but she offered none.

So it's clear that the NDP and the Liberals have chosen to reject the interests of their constituents, their contractors that are here today, their municipalities and, of course, Ontario taxpayers—first and foremost, Ontario taxpayers, the folks whom this party have stood up to protect today. And the NDP and the Liberals have decided to oppose restoring fairness in the construction industry simply to appease the demands of the special interest groups who support them. Shame on you.

So we will continue. We respect the right of people and workers to work on public infrastructure. That is their right here in Canada. We talk a lot about rights. If they're a qualified contractor, like many folks in the Legislature today, it is their right to work on public infrastructure, but you're denying that right. You're saying no. It's not fair. Well, today I have proposed a sound, logical, clear bill that would protect fairness in Ontario and give workers their rights back—the ones who have lost that right to work on public infrastructure. Today I am proud to stand up, on behalf of my colleagues and our leader, Tim Hudak, to restore that fairness, to stand up for hundreds of municipalities across the province, thousands of contractors and millions of taxpayers. We have done that and will continue to do it.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** We'll take the vote on that item at the end of private members' public business.

#### CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AMENDMENT ACT (CHILDREN 16 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER), 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES SERVICES À L'ENFANCE ET À LA FAMILLE (ENFANTS DE 16 ANS ET PLUS)

Mr. Jackson moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 88, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act with respect to children 16 years of age and older / Projet de loi 88, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfance et à la famille en ce qui concerne les enfants de 16 ans et plus.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** I'd like to start by explaining how this flaw in the system came to light. About a year and a half ago, there was something called the Youth Leaving Care hearings. What happened was that we had a number of youth who had spent their whole youth or parts of their youth living in care of the state. They lived with foster families or in some way, shape or form have actually found themselves without a family. It might be because they were abused or maybe because their parents passed



away. There are so many different reasons that these children have found themselves in care.

In the Youth Leaving Care hearings, what we heard from them was, now that they've left care or they are leaving care, their experiences within the system. What we found was that there was a need in the system to fill a gap. If you're 16 or 17 years old and you have a tragic circumstance that leaves you without parental guidance, without parents, anyone responsible for you, you're treated as an adult. I don't think anybody in this House can look at me and tell me that they think a child who's 16 or 17 years old, especially if they have had a difficult childhood, is prepared to care for themselves in a way that will create a meaningful and successful succession for themselves into the future.

What the system is saying to 16- and 17-year-olds at this time, if they go and knock on the door and say, "Hey, I'm being abused by my family," or, "My parents have passed away," or any guardian of theirs has passed away—they're left with nothing. The door is closed in their face. They're left to be treated as adults.

This means that the only things that are available to them are services like homeless shelters. Many of them don't even know where to find a homeless shelter. They've never experienced that before. Suing their parents—what youth is (a) going to know that they have the right to do that, or (b) have the resources to be able to go ahead and do it? Should that be a resort that they have to take on themselves? Or they have to make the case for Ontario Works. These are systems that are there for adults. We should not be sending our children who are 16 and 17 years old to the street. This is where many of them end up. This is a gap, though.

Right now, and this is the part that stuns me, Mr. Speaker, if you're 15 years old and you have one of those tragic circumstances where you find yourself without a parent, you can get care. You have provisions for care for yourself to go into foster care. All the different funding models that are available for those children to go to post-secondary education are available to you until you are an adult. If you go into care when you're 15, you have access to all those provisions. If you go into care when you're 16 or 17 years old, you don't get them. It's unfair. It's a violation of the human rights charter of Canada. It's a violation of the UN convention on the rights of children as well.

I will say, Mr. Speaker, that I don't believe this is done by any government of Ontario, I don't believe this is done by this government, in any way maliciously or anything like that. I'm not accusing this government of anything—perhaps inaction. I would like to know why, for 10 years, no action has been taken on filling this gap for 16- and 17-year-olds. But more importantly, I want to get this done. I want to make sure that this is taken care of.

It should come as no surprise to you that these children will struggle to stay in school. Most of them will never see an end to their education—not in the way that we want to see, a real graduate. They leave because they

have to take care of themselves. They have to earn a living. They have to have a roof and food.

They have elevated rates of incarceration. They have more hospitalizations due to high-risk street behaviours. These are facts. We know this. The children's advocate has done a study on this. There have been many studies done on it. We don't need to have another panel, another discussion about this. We know these facts to be true.

So, in practice, these children are set on a path where they are accessing reactive emergency services to cope once they find themselves in trouble, as opposed to the services that set them up for future opportunity, meanwhile keeping them safe.

Like the social costs of ending up homeless or in the prison system, the monetary costs of these things are also too steep. The numbers speak for themselves. I know even some of my own party and certainly some from across the way will wonder how much this will cost. Well, it won't cost you money; it's going to save you money, and here's how it's going to do it.

An economic analysis from Justice for Children and Youth, who provide legal services to street youth, found this: \$2,500 is the cost of providing a youth with emergency shelter for one month, which, by the way, is the maximum many youth shelters allow children to stay. They found that \$8,000 is the cost of incarcerating a youth for one month. Finally, \$4,500 is the monthly cost of support services to a homeless person provided by the police, health care and other community supports. I would even argue that that number's a little low.

None of these have a good outcome, necessarily. Many of these are just people hanging on by their fingernails. They're just hanging on by a thread. What kind of message are we sending to those youth—that we're not going to take care of them or give them the chance to succeed that they deserve as youth in our system and in our communities? Look them in the eye and tell them that you don't care and you're going to slam the door on them and send them to Ontario Works, to the hospital or somewhere worse. Many of them have the worst outcome. That's the saddest part.

#### 1520

Overall, the cost of supporting homeless youth is between \$6,500 and \$8,000 per homeless youth per month. But what if we did more to ensure that youth who enter into the child welfare system at 16 or 17 years old stay off the street by providing them with the same protections as their peers who happen to go into care a little bit earlier? Well, in comparison to supporting a homeless youth, the cost of supports, such as an income supplement or supportive housing arrangements, including a community support worker for that youth, are found to be much less costly: as low as \$1,000 per month.

So we can see that there is a significant economic argument here. Not only that, not only do we benefit economically; our society and communities benefit immensely from this. We're giving these kids a chance to succeed. Just by treating youth who enter the system at

16 or 17—children under 18—by providing them with the same types of supports as their peers already in the system, we can help ensure that no child has to sleep on the street; no child ends up in prison due to the stressors and risks associated with homelessness. We can also potentially save the province up to \$7,000 per month for every youth that's in care.

Beyond the obvious cost of homelessness, we also need to remember that without providing youth with the care they deserve, it's harder for them to receive an education or to find a stable job, and they're more likely to end up on the street as adults. So without providing youth who enter the system at 16 or 17 years old with the care they deserve and need now, not only does the province lose money but our society also potentially loses tradespeople, scientists, doctors, nurses, teachers—advocates of all sorts—and entrepreneurs. We allow for the loss of potential of the people who make this province great.

I have seen many great examples of this in my own life, where people have been given a chance through that system. Today I met Kayla, who is in the gallery today, who had a great story and spoke from her heart about what the system has given her and how other children who are 16 or 17 years old may not have that advantage and may not have the opportunity to succeed like she did. She has got a voice for hundreds, maybe even thousands, of kids who need it. She wouldn't be up there today speaking at that press conference if she wasn't given the chances and opportunities that we need to get to all these 16- and 17-year-olds who go into care.

With this bill we can make a small but important step by stopping these losses. We can ensure that every child has a fair opportunity to achieve his or her potential and to have a decent standard of living. We can ensure that Ontario will prosper into the future.

Furthermore, there's a more all-encompassing issue here to discuss as well: human rights. The circumstances that the current legislation imposes on these children are a contravention, as I mentioned, of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Specifically, each child has the right to develop to the fullest and have protection from harmful influences such as abuse and exploitation. This, clearly, is not being fulfilled when you treat these youth as adults.

Similarly, the Canadian Charter guarantees the right to life, liberty and security of person. But when Justice for Children and Youth, who provide legal services for street youth, did an analysis, they found that 76% of street youth were victims of violent crimes—76%. Can any of us here say that we've—many of us can't even say we've ever experienced violence against us. Many of us can, but certainly not 76% of us. The mere fact that these 16- and 17-year-olds in need for the first time are treated asymmetrically to their same-aged peers who have accessed the child welfare system prior to 16 years of age is discrimination—flat-out discrimination—based on their age.

In the developed world, Ontario lags behind all jurisdictions doing the least amount for this group of youth. The child welfare community has been lobbying for this for over a decade, to no avail. The consequences for this systemic error are not limited to the individual children that it affects, but is a province-wide crisis. Justice for Children and Youth, which provides legal services to children; the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies; the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth; and the Barrie CAS all support this bill.

In conclusion, these children are the same as their same-age peers who have previously benefited from this system. They deserve consideration and support as would any child in need under the age of 18. I shouldn't have to appeal to your logic on this, folks. I should only have to appeal to your heart and your compassion as leaders in your communities to pass this bill.

The current system sets these children on the most difficult life path possible. At the same time, it strains costly emergency services that can easily be remedied by respecting human rights—it seems like it's pretty simple, doesn't it?—and doing the right thing by investing in these youth in the same way as the rest of Ontario's children who are under the age of 18.

It's a true pleasure to see the support for this bill by all the people here in the gallery today. I'm really emboldened by their participation in this. I have said this before, and I repeat myself over and again: This is your bill. The input for all of this bill came from you. It started with the leaving care hearings, and it continued throughout the past year of consultations. It's your bill. This is your House. We're here for you. Hopefully, everybody in this House understands that and will put their hand up and stand in support of it.

*Interruption.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I will just remind our audience in the gallery: We welcome you here to participate, but I would ask you to refrain from cheering or clapping or participating in a very active way in the debate.

*Further debate?*

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I want to thank and congratulate the member from Barrie for bringing this bill forward. I think it's a really great bill. I'm so thrilled to see some of the folks from Youth Leaving Care here with us today. Welcome again to Queen's Park. Hopefully, we can move this forward and continue with all of the work necessary to be done.

When I first arrived at Queen's Park, one of the very first functions I attended was the Youth Leaving Care hearings. Those were held in November of the same year, 2011. Our Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, Irwin Elman, had met with and heard from a group of Ontario's 8,300 children and youth in care, a group that was making sure they were going to be heard by their parent, the Ontario government.

With the support of the advocate and his office, they organized the Youth Leaving Care hearings. It was the youth coming together and making sure we had changes



to our welfare system. Those hearings were wonderful, educational, inspirational and, at the same time, a heartbreaking experience. No one who took part could fail to be touched by the testimonies presented or to be impressed by the organization of the two days of hearings.

The result of those hearings was a report called *My Real Life Book*, a reference to the life books that record the life of a child in care—some with more details, some with very little. The report made a number of recommendations: Raise the age for extended care maintenance to 25; allow youth to stay in foster care and group care until they are ready for independence; ensure that every child has ongoing access to health and education services; monitor and improve the experiences of children and youth in care by gathering, tracking and publishing information; use online resources to make it easier for children and youth in care to find out about their rights, jobs, volunteer opportunities and scholarships. These were some of the recommendations of the Youth Leaving Care team, but their number one recommendation was that the government of Ontario complete an action plan for fundamental change.

The hearings, the creative videos, the youthful yet mature enthusiasm of the participants and the eye-catching report served not only to highlight the issues as seen from the youth in care, but also to fuel a broader discussion about how we might improve the system.

In January of this year, we got the action plan in the form of a *Blueprint for Fundamental Change to Ontario's Child Welfare System*, the report of the Youth Leaving Care Working Group. Let me quote one tiny part of that report, and you can find it on page 21 in the report. "It is essential and urgent that the ministry extends the age of protection to 18."

1530

I agree with the working group, and I agree with the intent of this bill. Currently, we are saying to 16- and 17-year-olds who are perhaps in an abusive situation at home, "Tough luck. There's nothing we can do to help you out." That's simply not acceptable. We give them no options, no supports, and for many the only escape is the streets. What sort of escape is that? No money, sleeping in shop doorways, begging for a few pennies to try to have a little bit of food in their stomach, and constantly in fear of what or who will come around the corner next. It's a sad reality, and there are way too many people out there ready to exploit these youth. But escape they must. Home is a place that for most of us is a refuge, a place of comfort and unconditional love, but for them it is a place even more terrifying than the street.

The hard thing to understand is the fact that these kids, if they were in the system before the age of 16, could be in care until the age of 18. But if they're over 16 when they first come to the attention of the child welfare agencies, the Child and Family Services Act says that we cannot get involved. It makes absolutely no sense. We're letting our youth down, and quite frankly, I think we're letting ourselves down in this House. The fact that we

keep youth in care until the age of 18 means that we recognize that 16 is too young to expect them to be able to support themselves.

As a society, we see children staying home longer and longer. More than half of Ontarians between the ages of 20 and 24 still live at home with their parents; many don't leave until their late 20s. Yet, as a province, we cut off potential for support and refuge at the tender age of 16. With this bill, children who are 16 or 17 years old who are needing it for the first time can choose to access our child welfare system, a move that would bring us in line with the expectations of the global community. We in Ontario fail to meet our obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which speaks to a child's right to protection from abuse and neglect and defines a child as anyone who is under the age of 18. It would bring us on par with Quebec, Alberta, Manitoba, British Columbia and the Yukon, all of which protect children from abuse and neglect until they're up to the age of 18 or 19.

Mr. Speaker, as the Association of Children's Aid Societies points out, elsewhere in Ontario law, a child is defined as under the age of 18. The Age of Majority and Accountability Act requires a litigation guardian to represent children under 18 in court proceedings. The Education Act requires children to attend school until graduation or until the age of 18. The law reform act recognizes parents' obligations to provide financial support well past the age of 18 if their child is attending a post-secondary institution or cannot be self-sufficient due to illness or disability. It's time to bring Ontario's child welfare system more in line with other Ontario laws, more in line with other Canadian jurisdictions and more in line with other international agreements.

As I said, I support this bill, but I do have some concerns. I'm concerned about the challenges that will be faced by the children's aid society as it works to meet this added obligation. Don't get me wrong; I know that they agreed to this fundamental change that needs to happen and want to be able to provide services to 16- and 17-year-olds. But I have spoken in this House before about the cuts to funding being suffered by children's aid societies. I know that the government will claim, as they have before, that funding has not been cut but that it's only being redistributed across the province. Many children's aids are already challenged by the impact of the new funding model and are receiving little understanding or help from the government in meeting those challenges. But beyond that, the idea that there are no cuts is simply not accurate, and they know it isn't accurate. They know, whether they admit it or not, that because the government has put an end to the year-end funding, less money will flow to children's aid societies this year than last year or the year before. If the government was to come clean on this and have an honest conversation, we might be able to get somewhere.

This is a very important bill and one that I can absolutely easily support, but we have much more to do. Our Voice, Our Turn laid the groundwork with the Youth

Leaving Care hearings and brought the key issues forward in the My Real Life Book. The minister responded by establishing, along with the advocate for children and youth, the Youth Leaving Care Working Group. The group made a number of excellent recommendations that provide a useful road map for us all to consider. For example, a key recommendation in both My Real Life Book and the blueprint for fundamental change was to raise the extended care maintenance to 25. Our government decided that they would make a move on that, but they limited it to youth who are attending a post-secondary institution, so we have a bit to go before we can actually put a tick in that box.

Where are we with allowing youth to stay in foster or group homes until they're ready to leave? Where are we in ensuring that every child has their ongoing health care needs met? Have we started to monitor and collect the needed information to track the experiences of our youth in care as recommended by the youth leaving care teams? Are we developing resources that will allow youth to access information on their rights, on jobs, on extracurricular activities or volunteer opportunities? Has anything been done to establish an accountability framework that promotes consistent child welfare practices across this province? These are just a few of the recommendations, and we need to push forward and see some action on them, and see some real action for our youth in care.

In closing, I want to thank the youth who have made their voices heard in advocating for all of these changes. It's because of their hard work that we see these changes happening. It's because of their hard work that we have as many bills in front of this House at this time to deal with their issues.

I think it's absolutely fabulous that you brought this forward. Like I said, we will be supporting this bill. We know we need many changes. I'm happy to see the minister here today listening, nodding her head. I hope that means a good thing, that she's here and that she looks like she would be in agreement to making this move forward, because it is an important step.

We do need to make sure that we're taking care of 16- and 17-year-old children of this province. I know myself, I have heard from residents and parents and grandparents saying, "What am I going to do? I need to move forward with this. Things need to happen. My child's going to be 16 in a month. Then what happens?" Right? Anything can possibly happen after a child turns 16, and then they're left on their own. I know what I was doing at 16 and 17, and I don't know if I could have done that without my parents or without someone to make sure that I was on the right track. So thank you for the time to allow on this bill. Let's hope that it moves forward and that we get the support from the government.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** First, let me say I appreciate the member's comments and the member from Hamilton Mountain as well, in terms of the comments that she's just made as well in terms of this bill moving forward,

and your efforts to promote the well-being of all youth in Ontario, which is certainly something that I think everybody in this House can agree to and work together on. Bill 88, of course, highlights the need to support 16- and 17-year-olds whose parent are unable to care for them.

A key purpose of the Child and Family Services Act is to promote the best interests, protection and well-being of children. This private member's bill will enable youth aged 16 and 17 with no previous child welfare involvement to access support in the system. This is a concern that we heard from the Youth Leaving Care Working Group, which we've heard about. I thank the youth that did come out for those hearings, whom I listened to as well, for the courage and the strength that they demonstrated in terms of coming forward.

**1540**

I'd say this government has listened closely and we have worked with our partners, especially the young people in this province who have bravely brought their concerns and ideas to Queen's Park. We've heard as well from the provincial advocate on this topic, as well as the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, and Justice for Youth. I'd like to welcome all the reps who are here today. Thank you for your ongoing commitment promoting the well-being of all our children and youth.

Our partners have told us that youth aged 16 and 17 would benefit if we built on the progress that we've already made, so I appreciate this bill coming forward. At its root it shows that you and your party and everyone in the House agrees with our government's plan to help young people in this province reach their full potential.

We've made a lot of progress in creating a child welfare system that focuses on the needs of our children and youth. Even with this progress, we know we can do more to support. Youth without supportive placements don't have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

I can tell you that this government will certainly consider the proposed amendments. Part of what my ministry does on a regular basis is examine how we can better support youth, specifically those who are most vulnerable. I, along with my stakeholders, can see that these specific young people face significant challenges. While there are no simple solutions, a continued debate at committee is necessary in order to secure a sustainable future for these youth.

I want to ensure that all young people in Ontario have the best tools to prepare them for their future, whether that's attending university or college or landing their first job. I want to share our government's strong record in recognizing where improvements can be made and then responding with the right supports and services.

Immediately after receiving the insightful Blueprint report, we responded by taking a number of important steps to improve the lives of children and youth in, and leaving, care. These young people now have access to a range of new resources and supports that will help them stay in school, pursue post-secondary education training, maintain strong relationships, and better prepare them for leaving care.



We know how important a good education is to future success. That's why we're taking steps and making investments to encourage and help these young people get a strong education. For example, we're providing \$500 a month to crown wards enrolled in OSAP-eligible programs; expanding eligibility so that more youth can access the Ontario Access Grant; partnering with 29 publicly assisted colleges and universities in Ontario to jointly cover 100% of tuition fees.

Our government knows how important stability is to young people who have experienced upheaval. That's why we've also increased the minimum monthly financial support to youth aged 18 to 21 from \$663 to \$850, and are enhancing opportunities for mentorship.

These new resources and supports are big strides forward and they build on a number of steps that we've already taken, but there's always more to move forward. Youth age 16 and up who have left the care of CAS can now return and receive the financial and emotional supports they need until they turn 21. There are 50 youth-in-transition workers to support youth leaving the child welfare system to move towards independence.

I'd like to speak to support that youth aged 16 and older have access to. These include a range of mental health, health care and housing services and supports available in their communities. There are housing providers, youth drop-in centres and youth outreach workers. Specifically, our youth outreach workers in our communities connect young people to the right services and supports.

Investing in young people truly makes a difference. Our government is proud of the progress we've made and the supports we've enhanced for our young people. The Youth Leaving Care hearings at Queen's Park in 2011 taught us a very important lesson: Decision-makers need to respect young people's capacity to make decisions over their well-being and future. This bill has the potential to provide that opportunity to youth.

We appreciate that all 16- and 17-year-olds may require supports and services beyond those already available. As the Minister of Children and Youth Services and as a mother, I acknowledge the challenges this group of young people face. My oldest son is 17; he's in that age group. So I can certainly appreciate the needs of that age group. Unlike my son, many youth, unfortunately, don't experience a nurturing family environment their entire life.

We will continue working diligently to provide Ontario's children and youth with the services and supports they need to reach their full potential. I ask that members vote in favour of this bill and send it to committee for a more fulsome debate.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** As Ontario PC critic for children and youth services, it is my pleasure to rise today to speak to Bill 88. Thank you to the member from Barrie, who is bringing this legislation forward in the spirit of the Youth Leaving Care hearings, which took place here

at Queen's Park in November 2011. Those hearings made an enduring mark. The voices we heard continue to resonate with us.

But one of the hard truths we need to admit to ourselves, as legislators, is that not all children in need are part of the province's child welfare system. In fact, that system has a significant blind spot. As things stand, 16- and 17-year-olds who find themselves in need for the first time, perhaps because they're trying to escape a family environment of abuse and neglect, are denied access to support services that are available to their same-age peers.

Bill 88 would amend section 1 of the Child and Family Services Act to recognize that services provided under the act should be provided in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Doing so would allow children who are 16 and 17 and have never been in the public protection system to enter temporary care agreements—something now prohibited under the Child and Family Services Act—and access voluntary limited support services through the children's aid society until they turn 18.

As the member from Barrie has noted, the current exclusion is not simply a systemic failing but also a charter violation of both section 7, the right to life, liberty and security of the person, and section 15, the right to equal benefit of law without discrimination, since the current Child and Family Services Act discriminates against 16- and 17-year-old children.

The government's stand is that a 16-year-old looking for help for the first time is an adult and must find their way alone. That's not the reality we know. Statistics Canada tells us that over half of young people age 20 to 24 live at home with their parents, and something like a quarter live at home until they're 30 years of age. Yet not all young people are so fortunate. Study after study has shown that at-risk youth simply do not fare as well in life as other young adults. They're less likely to finish high school, pursue post-secondary education or even earn a living wage. They're more likely to spiral into poverty and mental health issues, and become entangled in the justice system. Early intervention that reduces the risk of those outcomes is both the moral and sensible thing to do.

Making this change will involve minimal new costs, and in fact will reduce the high social service costs associated with homelessness, addiction, mental health issues, criminal behaviour and so forth in later life. It will also hold out hope to young people. It will improve the odds that they are able to stay on track. It will increase their ability to reach their full potential and become happy and productive members of society.

I am happy to support Bill 88, and I look forward to further debate. I am very proud of the member from Barrie for bringing this forward; thank you so much for what you've done. And thank you, all of you out there, for all you've contributed to this.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Mitzie Hunter:** I would like to speak here today in support of Bill 88, and I would like to thank the member for Barrie for bringing this bill before the Legislature. This bill seeks to acknowledge and improve services to some of Ontario's most vulnerable youth, and it's an issue of importance to the people of my riding of Scarborough–Guildwood. It is an important bill that warrants discussion.

The goal of the Ontario government is to give children and youth in this province every opportunity to reach their full potential. This government is committed to improving the lives of Ontario's vulnerable children and youth.

**1550**

Since 2003, the Ontario government has increased funding for child protection by 40%. The Liberals continue to work hard to assist all youth, especially those who are considered to be at risk.

Investing in people and investing in youth is one of the main goals of the Ontario government. We have a strong record of investing in child welfare, helping the system become modern and accountable.

This bill seeks to continue this government's strong tradition of supporting youth. The youth of this province are our future, and the Ontario government has and will continue to invest in Ontario youth. This government's investment in youth services and supports will empower youth to reach their full potential.

Youth in this province, and in Scarborough–Guildwood, already have a wide range of large-scale programs and initiatives that will help them achieve a brighter future: Ontario's Youth Action Plan, Ontario's comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, the Poverty Reduction Strategy and the ongoing development of an Aboriginal Child and Youth Strategy. It is clear that the Liberal government believes in the youth of this province, and we want to give them every opportunity to reach their full potential.

We have listened to the youth within the system and the youth leaving the care of children's aid societies. Following the advice of the Youth Leaving Care Working Group, the Ontario government has developed and will continue to develop new resources and supports to help youth succeed as they leave care.

Our minister has acknowledged the recent supports and resources which include raising the monthly financial support to youth receiving continued care and support for youth aged 18 to 20 to \$850; the Living and Learning Grant, which provides \$500 per month during the school year to students aged 21 to 24 enrolled in OSAP through post-secondary institutions or training programs; developing mentorship opportunities for young people in care; improving training for caregivers; and funding up to 50 youth-in-transition workers across the province to support young people leaving care. We are committed to developing and creating additional supports and resources to help youth succeed as they leave care and start their lives as adults. This government's goal is to prepare the youth of this province for independence by support-

ing them while they secure housing, finish their education, pursue post-secondary education and training, develop and maintain strong relationships, and gain more stability in their lives.

Bill 88 seeks to enhance supports for a specific group of young people in this province. There is a need to provide these services for youth ages 16 and 17. This bill would close the gap and extend support to those who otherwise may not have access to these resources. This bill invests in Ontario's most vulnerable youth and seeks to help them on the path to reaching their full potential. Bill 88 reaffirms this government's plan for investing in people and helps make Ontario a more fair and prosperous society.

This bill will be well received by the child welfare sector. In particular, the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth and the Youth Leaving Care Working Group have both publicly called for an extension of service to youth ages 16 and 17. Both groups are here today. I'd like to acknowledge their commitment to improving services for vulnerable children in Ontario. It's this type of commitment that has inspired me to come to Queen's Park.

As such, our government will continue to be supportive and respectful to the opposition and their ideas. Speaker, our government does not want to let politics get in the way of good ideas that benefit all Ontarians. For that reason, I will support Bill 88. Thank you for this opportunity.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I am very pleased to rise again to speak in support of Bill 88, the Child and Family Services Amendment Act.

I would like to add my thanks for all of the people, all the supporters in the gallery today, particularly the young people, who have made it their mission to make sure that this legislation comes before us. Thank you for your dedication and commitment. We truly appreciate it. You're the ones who are making this happen, so kudos to you.

Before I address the substance of the bill, I would like to say something about my friend and colleague the member from Barrie. In the relatively short time that he has been a member of this Legislature, he has really made a name for himself as a passionate defender of human rights and for supporting the interests of vulnerable people.

In a previous private member's bill, he protested the use, by some school board personnel, of blocker pads in dealing with children with autism and other special needs. Now he's bringing forward another bill that's dealing with vulnerable people: young adults, or children, who are still 16 and 17 years of age.

I commend him for his efforts in this. We appreciate all that you're doing to support vulnerable people in our society. Thank you.

As people have mentioned, Bill 88 works to protect Ontario children. Today there is an anomaly in that youth



who are 16 and 17 years of age cannot seek the services of children's aid societies if they have not already done so by the time they are 16.

We're currently letting these youth slip through the cracks of our system, with the result that often they end up without a place to live, so they couch-surf without a permanent home, they end up homeless on the street or, in some cases, they get caught up in our criminal justice system and end up in jail or other institutions that are not exactly welcoming.

This bill would equalize the young adults who are currently in the children's aid system with those who are seeking help for the first time at age 16 or 17.

As has been noted, in Canada 76% of homeless youth suffer victimization. This bill would help to solve the issue of youth living on the streets and ensure that all young people under the age of 18 have a safe place to live if they can no longer live at home for whatever reason.

Canada has signed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that all individuals under the age of 18 are guaranteed basic rights. We clearly are not in compliance with this convention at this time in Ontario. In fact, Ontario is the only jurisdiction in the developed world that tolerates this human rights violation. As a society which prides itself on the services and the protections that we provide to individuals, as a province we are failing these young people, both now and into their future.

Allowing 16- and 17-year-olds the option to seek assistance from the children's aid society, if needed, not only would help keep our children off the streets; it would also help the rest of our social services system. By giving our young people the ability to seek care, it will reduce the high cost of homeless shelters, medical care and hospitalization resulting from living on the streets. In other words, with a very small investment up front that truly helps people, we can stave off some of the unwanted complications and needless costs resulting from our failure to deal with this situation.

In Ontario, we need to work to protect the vulnerable members of our society. Our youth are an invaluable resource. Bill 88 will help keep young people from a life of homelessness and ensure that they have the tools necessary to succeed in life. We want to be able to offer hope and a future for our young people.

I'm very pleased to stand here to lend my support for this bill and urge all members to support it, which it sounds very much as if they will be doing.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Rob Leone:** I'm pleased to rise on behalf of my constituents of Cambridge to talk about Bill 88, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act with respect to children 16 years of age and older.

I very much want to highlight what's in the explanatory note, which states that the "act is amended to include a new purpose of the act, which is to recognize that services provided under the act should be provided in

accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child."

**1600**

It strikes me that we are here, in 2013, debating a bill that actually, frankly, neglects a certain segment of the population from getting the care that they need and deserve. I think it's certainly the fundamental role of government to be able to talk about the things that help society's most vulnerable people.

In saying that, I want to commend my good friend from Barrie on the work that he has done, not only in devising this bill but in other pieces of legislation that he has brought forward. Certainly he has brought forward—previous to this, we debated a bill that protects autistic kids from the blocker pads. He has developed a brand of compassion and of fighting for our most vulnerable children. He should be commended and congratulated for that. So thank you very much to the member from Barrie.

Mr. Speaker, I received an email not too long ago that talked about some of the challenges that our social services groups are facing—our homeless shelter, in particular. This suggests that the numbers in Ontario for August were very high. In fact, it was the highest month they had ever had with a 25% increase in bed nights over August of last year, which was our highest month at that point in time. We are maxed out and beyond capacity in all areas for the shelter. All shelters in our region are experiencing the same kind of stress. There does not appear to be any kind of long-term plan to deal with it.

A lot of the reasons why there are issues with respect to our shelters is because the discretionary benefits were actually cut in the budget of the government that was supported by the NDP, which has led to a burgeoning homelessness crisis right here in our region and particularly in the province of Ontario.

This bill has the capacity to rise above that, to allow us to talk about how we can help our young people from avoiding that plight of losing their home, by enforcing and helping these people who are 16 and 17 years of age from getting the services that they need. And why wouldn't we do that, Mr. Speaker? It makes a whole lot of sense, because the small investments we will make today will help these people gain the mentorship, be able to stand on their feet, will help them even get the education they need so they become productive members of their society.

In saying that, Bill 88 speaks right to the heart for me, as a father of three kids. I think that we should all congratulate the member for Barrie for bringing this thoughtful piece of legislation forward. It's about protecting our kids. It's about ensuring that even our most vulnerable children have the rights and accessibility to a good life that all children in the province of Ontario should have. Therefore, I will wholeheartedly support the member from Barrie.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Barrie, you have two minutes for a reply.

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** I'd like to thank, in no particular order, the member from Scarborough—Guildwood, the

minister, the member from Hamilton Mountain, the member from Cambridge, the member from Whitby–Oshawa and, of course, our own critic, the member from Burlington, for standing up in support of this bill.

It is one of those rare occasions in this House where we have something fairly important in front of us that we all can agree on. It heartens me a lot, in the true sense of the word, to be able to stand here and know that we have the support of everybody on this bill and some of the great things that we can get done.

It is just the beginning, though. There are so many other things that we need to get done as far as dealing with our child welfare system. This is just the beginning, and we've got a long way to go. It's going to happen. We need to have more of a discussion at committee. I look forward to having that discussion in committee.

If that's what this bill does, too—if this starts a greater discussion about the needs for children in our welfare system, and it has to do with the health, the mental health, and the ability to create a successful model for our kids so they can have success into the future and become excellent contributing members of our society, then we've accomplished something here in this House today that I think speaks more than to just Bill 88. It speaks to our willingness to be leaders in our community, to be able to stand up for what's right. Some of the most vulnerable people in our community—there's a gap here that they're falling into many times, and we're actually filling that gap. Hopefully, we can come together, Minister, and hopefully you'll advocate for this to go to third reading. I know that's rare for a PMB, but this is something that—you know what?—I'm even willing to give to you to make your own. It needs to get done. Let's get it done.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

#### CULTURAL DIVERSITY

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** We will deal first with ballot item number 37, standing in the name of Mr. Kwinter.

Mr. Kwinter has moved private member's notice of motion 42. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a bunch of noes.

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Carried.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I'm sorry, I didn't see you. We will take the vote at the end of regular business.

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I missed them.

#### FAIR AND OPEN TENDERING ACT (LABOUR RELATIONS FOR CERTAIN PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYERS IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY), 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 POUR DES APPELS D'OFFRES ÉQUITABLES ET OUVERTS (RELATIONS DE TRAVAIL CHEZ CERTAINS EMPLOYEURS DU SECTEUR PUBLIC DANS L'INDUSTRIE DE LA CONSTRUCTION)

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Harris has moved second reading of Bill 73, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act, 1995 with respect to certain public sector employers in the construction industry.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a bunch of noes.

All those in favour of the motion, please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We'll reserve the vote till the end of private members' business.

#### CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AMENDMENT ACT (CHILDREN 16 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER), 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES SERVICES À L'ENFANCE ET À LA FAMILLE (ENFANTS DE 16 ANS ET PLUS)

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Jackson has moved second reading of Bill 88, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act with respect to children 16 years of age and older.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Jackson?

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** I'd like to refer it to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills, please.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member has requested that the bill be sent to regulations and private bills. Agreed? Agreed.

Call in the members. There will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1608 to 1613.*

#### CULTURAL DIVERSITY

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Kwinter has moved private member's notice of motion number 42.

All those in favour, please rise and remain standing.

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura  
Armstrong, Teresa J.

Gerretsen, John  
Gravelle, Michael

Miller, Paul  
Milloy, John



Arnott, Ted  
Bailey, Robert  
Barrett, Toby  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bradley, James J.  
Campbell, Sarah  
Cansfield, Donna H.  
Chan, Michael  
Chudleigh, Ted  
Clark, Steve  
Colle, Mike  
Coteau, Michael  
Crack, Grant  
Damerla, Dipika  
Del Duca, Steven  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic  
Dickson, Joe  
Duguid, Brad  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Elliott, Christine  
Fedeli, Victor  
Fife, Catherine  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Forster, Cindy  
Fraser, John

Hardeman, Ernie  
Harris, Michael  
Hatfield, Percy  
Holyday, Douglas C.  
Hoskins, Eric  
Hudak, Tim  
Hunter, Mitzie  
Jackson, Rod  
Jaczek, Helena  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Jones, Sylvia  
Klees, Frank  
Kwinter, Monte  
Leone, Rob  
MacCharles, Tracy  
MacLaren, Jack  
Mangat, Amrit  
Marchese, Rosario  
McNaughton, Monte  
Mauro, Bill  
McDonnell, Jim  
McKenna, Jane  
McMeekin, Ted  
McNaughton, Monte  
McNeely, Phil  
Miller, Norm

Moridi, Reza  
Munro, Julia  
Murray, Glen R.  
Naqvi, Yasir  
Natyshak, Taras  
Nicholls, Rick  
O'Toole, John  
Piruzza, Teresa  
Prue, Michael  
Sandals, Liz  
Schein, Jonah  
Scott, Laurie  
Sergio, Mario  
Singh, Jagmeet  
Smith, Todd  
Tabuns, Peter  
Taylor, Monique  
Walker, Bill  
Wilson, Jim  
Wong, Soo  
Wynne, Kathleen O.  
Yakubski, John  
Yurek, Jeff  
Zimmer, David

**Nays**  
Albanese, Laura  
Armstrong, Teresa J.  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bradley, James J.  
Campbell, Sarah  
Cansfield, Donna H.  
Chan, Michael  
Colle, Mike  
Coteau, Michael  
Crack, Grant  
Damerla, Dipika  
Del Duca, Steven  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic  
Dickson, Joe  
Duguid, Brad  
Fife, Catherine  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Forster, Cindy  
Fraser, John  
Gerretsen, John  
Gravelle, Michael  
Hatfield, Percy  
Hoskins, Eric  
Hunter, Mitzie  
Jaczek, Helena  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Kwinter, Monte  
MacCharles, Tracy  
Mangat, Amrit  
Marchese, Rosario  
Matthews, Deborah  
Mauro, Bill  
McMeekin, Ted  
McNeely, Phil  
Miller, Paul

Millroy, John  
Moridi, Reza  
Murray, Glen R.  
Naqvi, Yasir  
Natyshak, Taras  
Piruzza, Teresa  
Prue, Michael  
Sandals, Liz  
Schein, Jonah  
Sergio, Mario  
Singh, Jagmeet  
Tabuns, Peter  
Taylor, Monique  
Wong, Soo  
Wynne, Kathleen O.  
Zimmer, David

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 30; the nays are 52.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I declare the motion lost.

*Second reading negatived.*

1620

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### WIRELESS SERVICES AGREEMENTS ACT, 2013

### LOI DE 2013 SUR LES CONVENTIONS DE SERVICES SANS FIL

Resuming the debate adjourned on September 12, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 60, An Act to strengthen consumer protection with respect to consumer agreements relating to wireless services accessed from a cellular phone, smart phone or any other similar mobile device / Projet de loi 60, Loi visant à mieux protéger les consommateurs en ce qui concerne les conventions de consommation portant sur les services sans fil accessibles au moyen d'un téléphone cellulaire, d'un téléphone intelligent ou de tout autre appareil mobile semblable.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Bramalea–Gore–Malton.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** It would be my distinct pleasure to continue this debate, so thank you so much for the opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I said this before and I want to stress this point—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Repeat it many times.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** My friend from Trinity–Spadina encourages me to do so, and I will, because the problem here is that there is a limited amount of time that we have in this Legislature. It's a limited time. We don't have a lot of time here. Given the fact that we don't have a lot of time here, we have to use our time here wisely. That makes sense, right? We need to use our time here wisely. Using it wisely means prioritizing certain bills and recognizing that other bills may not be as necessary to bring forth.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** All those opposed, please rise and remain standing.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 82; the nays are 0.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I declare the motion carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Can we open the doors before I take the next vote?

### FAIR AND OPEN TENDERING ACT (LABOUR RELATIONS FOR CERTAIN PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYERS IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY), 2013

### LOI DE 2013 POUR DES APPELS D'OFFRES ÉQUITABLES ET OUVERTS (RELATIONS DE TRAVAIL CHEZ CERTAINS EMPLOYEURS DU SECTEUR PUBLIC DANS L'INDUSTRIE DE LA CONSTRUCTION)

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Harris has moved second reading of Bill 73, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act, 1995 with respect to certain public sector employers in the construction industry. All those in favour, please rise and remain standing.

#### Ayes

Arnott, Ted  
Bailey, Robert  
Barrett, Toby  
Chudleigh, Ted  
Clark, Steve  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Elliott, Christine  
Fedeli, Victor  
Hardeman, Ernie  
Harris, Michael

Holyday, Douglas C.  
Hudak, Tim  
Jackson, Rod  
Jones, Sylvia  
Klees, Frank  
Leone, Rob  
MacLaren, Jack  
McDonnell, Jim  
McKenna, Jane  
McNaughton, Monte

Miller, Norm  
Munro, Julia  
Nicholls, Rick  
O'Toole, John  
Scott, Laurie  
Smith, Todd  
Walker, Bill  
Wilson, Jim  
Yakubski, John  
Yurek, Jeff

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** All those opposed, please rise and remain standing.

There was a time, a distinct time, when Ontario did not have an adequate piece of legislation that governed wireless contracts—it didn't. Other provinces did have it. So naturally Ontario felt the need, understandably, to bring forth some legislation to provide protection for consumers. But the federal government then stepped in and introduced a significant code called the wireless code. The CRTC put that forward. It's now enacted. It was presented in June of this year—June 3, 2013—and it will be in effect by December 2, 2013. This bill, which is a federal bill, applies across the country and it provides for almost every point that's in the proposed bill, G60. In fact, it goes further because federally there is a broader mandate and the CRTC has the ability to provide for certain provisions that were not available to the province.

So the CRTC covers things like putting a cap on roaming charges, putting a cap on data charges. If you're travelling overseas—we heard those examples of people that were on vacation and inadvertently their cellphone were turned on or a young child was playing with the phone and turned it on and ended up racking up thousands of dollars in roaming charges, in data fees. People were up in arms, saying, "How could this be possible? How could it be so easy to rack up a bill of \$20,000 and there are no checks and balances in place?" People were understandably upset. The CRTC intervened and created a pretty broad wireless code that provides for a lot of protection.

The reason I mention this is because there was a time when Bill G60 was relevant—when it was G82. At this point in time, given the limited time that we have in this House, its relevance isn't what it was before. There are a number of other bills that I think it would be so important to bring forward. I'm commending the Attorney General for bringing this forward in the first place. Good job—many, many years too late.

There have been a number of recommendations brought forward requesting anti-SLAPP legislation. The NDP presented a very similar bill, requesting this government to follow suit and actually enact anti-SLAPP legislation. Years and years had passed, but, in fairness, finally the Attorney General brought it forward. It was an important piece of legislation, the reason being that the anti-SLAPP legislation essentially protects people who are voicing dissent.

I'm a strong advocate of the right to dissent. I think that's really one of the most important hallmarks of democracy. The ability to get up and say, "I disagree with the government," or, "I disagree with what's going on in my community," or, "I don't like this" is your right. SLAPPs are essentially strategic lawsuits brought against people, raising their concerns.

The fact that that bill wasn't brought forward, which I think is very timely, very relevant and something that the community is crying out for—the community of activists, the people who are engaged in their communities, who want to stand up for issues that matter, are saying, "This is something we need to see enacted. We needed to see this 10 years ago, but now is good, if we can bring it

forward." I think a bill like that would have been a more appropriate use of the time that we have here.

Let's speak about some of the things in this bill that I think are quite strong.

One of the things that has come up time and time again is that when we provide people with a protection, when we give them a guarantee, all too often what happens is, two problems come up. One, there's no enforcement. So you say that someone has a particular right or they're guaranteed a certain protection, but then they try to make use of that protection or that right, they end up suffering the consequences because there is no enforcement of that right; there is no enforcement of that protection. The second problem is that if you apply a penalty to someone for doing something that's inappropriate, there's no sanction.

In this case, I have to actually admit that there is a strong provision for a sanction. In this bill presented by the government, G60, one of the key pieces of this legislation is open disclosure of contracts. As a consumer, if I want to buy a cellphone or I want to sign up for an agreement, there needs to be a transparent contract, which has clear language, which is easy to understand. If any of those criteria aren't met and I wish to cancel my contract because it turns out I didn't understand there was a particular fee that was slipped in there or there was some piece of that contract that I didn't understand, this bill provides for a remedy or a sanction. The remedy in this case is that you can cancel your bill. That's good. You can cancel your wireless agreement—no penalties. You're able to cancel your contract if the language wasn't clear, if it didn't disclose all the costs. That, to me, is a good remedy, and it was a good step forward, saying, "We are going to give a right but also provide a sanction or a penalty or a remedy." That, to me, is a meaningful type of law.

Another example of where this bill does something that I think we need to emulate in other areas is that if, for some reason, the wireless provider charged you too much—you cancel your contract, and they charge you far too much, more than you're supposed to be charged—the bill provides for a provision where you can sue the company for doing that, and it gives you the right to sue for three times the amount you're owed. I think a good reason for that is—maybe you were charged \$100 more than you should have been charged, and you look at your options. You could sue for \$100, go to Small Claims Court, spend a whole day in court, and maybe it's not worth it to you. Maybe you think that \$100 isn't worth it. "I want the \$100. Times are tough. But if I take a day off work, I could have made almost \$100 anyway. It's not really worth it to me." But if you can actually sue for three times the amount you're owed, which is \$300, you might say, "You know, it's worth it for me to take the time to get out there and actually proceed with this legal action." That, to me, is a real remedy. You're giving a right, but you're also giving a protection, or a penalty, or a sanction, so that the right actually has some meaning, some value. I think that makes a lot of sense.



1630

What I had mentioned before, and I think it deserves some reiteration, is that the reality is that in Ontario, and really across the world, cellphone usage is increasing. That's something we're commonly aware of. But more than just increasing, cellphones are now more and more the primary means by which people communicate with one another. There are many households now where they don't have land lines and instead they have cellphones.

The other particularly interesting fact that I've noted is that cellphones now are increasingly the actual preferred way that people are using to access the Internet. For me, this is a particularly important point, because the Internet, in my opinion, is a resource now that's no longer simply a luxury or a pastime or a source of entertainment. The Internet is becoming increasingly an important resource. People can access information. It's a way to make applications for services. Many of the government services that we receive—there are ways to access that information online. School applications now are primarily online applications. So, really, access to the Internet is a serious and important way of accessing important resources.

If the Internet is an important resource—it's something that provides us with the information that we need, access to that information and provides us with access to the resources that we would like to take part in or to access or to enjoy or to use—then our ability to access the Internet is quite important, and the more accessible the Internet is, the more free our societies will be, if that's an important resource.

If cellphone usage is the primary way that people are going to access the Internet, then we need to make sure that cellphones and that data uses, particularly, are affordable, that people can actually access the Internet through their cellphones in an accessible way and in an affordable way.

While I agree with the idea of open disclosure of contracts, and I agree with the protections afforded by this bill with respect to cancellations and not overcharging individuals when it comes to cancelling a plan, and if they were given a cellphone as an incentive to sign up a plan, that they shouldn't have to pay twice or triple the costs of that cellphone—I agree with all of that. But where I think consumers need mere protection is actually the cost of cellphone plans. Right now, in Ontario, and in Canada, we're paying some of the highest cellphone rates—not only in Canada, but in the world. That's a serious problem. Again, if we're talking about accessibility, and it's so expensive to actually pay for the wireless services, that's an area where consumers need some protection. We need to step in and ensure that wireless services are affordable and that we're not paying the highest prices in the world.

By comparison, Scandinavian countries pay far less than us; India, China and Hong Kong pay far less than us. We're, again, amongst the highest cost for cellphone wireless usage.

So that's an area that I think the government should take some action, in terms of trying to take some steps to make sure that it's more affordable. That's an area where the consumers would see some concrete protection and it would be an area that would be something important, necessary and, again, would promote and support accessibility.

What I mentioned in the couple of times I had an opportunity to speak on this bill is that one of the encouraging things that has come as a result of this bill—as a result of this discussion about wireless service agreements and the open disclosure and just the issue of wireless in general—is the way that this issue made it to this House today.

One of my big concerns, and I notice this in my riding, is that there is a lot of apathy. People are not engaged in politics. They're not participating in politics. They've been turned off. To me, a vibrant democracy requires people to be engaged in politics. They have to come out and turn out to vote. When they don't, to me, it's troubling, because I want to see people engaged in their communities and in governing themselves.

But sometimes voting isn't the only way you can get engaged politically. It's not the only way that you can voice your concerns. When it comes to this issue about cellphone wireless services, the way this issue made it to this House is that it was the primary area of complaints received by the ministry, particularly the organizations that are tasked with reporting and recording the complaints received regarding telecommunications services.

The Commissioner for Complaints for Telecommunications Services, for the year 2010-11, received 8,007 complaints regarding telecommunications generally, which represents a 114% increase over previous years. Of these complaints, 75% were in relation to wireless services. So a vast majority of the complaints received by the CCTS were about cellphones, about wireless service issues, the fact their bills were too high or the fact that the contracts were hard to understand. These were issues brought up by the consumers, by the people, and their complaints and their raising of this issue resulted in this becoming a Ministry of Consumer Services issue that made it to the legislative floor.

Why I mention this is that I encourage people to engage in your community. If you don't want to engage in it politically—I hope you do, and I hope folks listening take the time to vote and exercise their right. But not only during election time; that's not the only time that you should be involved in your community. Complain. Complaining about things that aren't working, complaining about things in your community, is important. I also think that along with the complaint should be a solution; we should work towards brainstorming on solutions as well. But starting off with a complaint is a good starting point to get the issues forward, to bring them forward, to commence the discussion, to begin the discussion.

So I urge everybody to make sure in your communities, in your homes, in your neighbourhoods, in your cities, in your province, that you complain about things that you don't like. If you don't like the way the services are being delivered, make sure you voice that concern. Voice it to your local councillor. Voice it to your MPP, to your MP. It's important to bring up these issues because this is one mechanism for democracy. By complaining about things going around you, you can raise the awareness on that issue.

In this case, this is an example of where, with the 114% increase in complaints and the fact that 75% of those are related to wireless service agreements, it became an issue that this government actually took a stance on. So I encourage people, whatever it may be, if you're concerned about the high cost of auto insurance, then contact your local MPP and say, "Hey, what are you doing about that?" If you're concerned about the lack of home care services that are being delivered, complain about that as well. Because that is one of your ways of voicing your concern; that's one of your ways to engage in politics without waiting for an election.

One of the other areas this bill talks about, and we've touched on it briefly, is the type of language used in the agreements. The bill talks about open and clear and transparent language. All too often, consumers have complained to me, as a critic for consumer services, that in general when they sign an agreement, whether it's for door-to-door gas energy services or whether it's for a water heater, the contracts that are used are very hard to understand. They're not something that a layperson or a person who hasn't had the advantage or privilege of legal training can understand. I think it's a basic requirement that language in contracts should be accessible, easy to understand. And it shouldn't actually only be for wireless service agreements. This is a principle that should exist in all contracts.

So I encourage the ministry to look at this issue of having agreements, whatever area they may be in, whether it's in telecommunications, whether it's in home services that you receive, whether it's in appliance sales, whether it's in car sales, banking services, whatever falls within the purview of the province, so that, wherever we can, as the government—I urge the Ministry of Consumer Services to look at all agreements in any industry and make sure there is transparent language, easy-to-understand language, so it's not something where the consumer is simply reading an agreement and doesn't understand and doesn't appreciate all of the facts and all the considerations and signs on to something unwillingly or unknowing. I think it should be legislation that is set out for all agreements that the language should be transparent and should be something that's clear and accessible.

1640

Now, one of the reasons this bill has come forward is that there has been a lot of coverage in the past perhaps two years, more so in the past year. There has been clear indication that wireless service is an area of complaint,

and even now, it's an issue that Ontarians are concerned about.

But I turn back to my earlier comment: The wireless code covers things that are not covered by this province. The bill was brought forward knowing that the wireless code existed. One of my concerns is that there's redundancy created by this bill. What was the point of creating two pieces of legislation that do the exact same thing? My constructive criticism is this: We could have carved out portions of this bill that were already dealt with by the CRTC, which is a code, a guideline, that supersedes our provincial jurisdiction and applies across the country. That would have made this bill, in my mind, a bit more effective, a bit more clear.

The redundancy—the fact that there are two overlapping bills that cover the same territory—does not benefit the consumer, particularly when the CRTC goes further and provides greater protection with caps on data charges and caps on roaming charges. Having two pieces of legislation that overlap is not effective. I think we could have kept some of the sanctions and some of the remedies that are in this bill and, recognizing that the CRTC already exists, made this a stronger bill by not having those redundancies. Perhaps that's something we can look at when this bill finds its way to committee.

Another area of concern that's coming up—it doesn't fall underneath our provincial purview, but it's an area of concern in terms of what we can do to actually bring down the rates we're seeing here in Ontario. There has been discussion, on the federal side, of opening up competition. Right now, there's a bid that will be happening very soon. In my mind, it draws to mind some serious concerns.

The concern is this: The bidding process now moving forward is for new bandwidth, so that other providers and existing providers can bid on more airwaves or more cellphone ranges so they can either provide more services or new competitors can come into the market. One of the requirements that has been set out is that local authorities have requested full access to be able to surveil transmissions. It's an area of concern in that, more and more in this digital age, we're seeing that our privacy interests are being superseded by technology and by surveillance by the government.

The issue is quite relevant when you look at what has happened with the NSA in the States and issues around a charter-protected right. We have the right to security. We have the right not to be unlawfully searched. We have the right not to be arbitrarily detained. These rights are cherished rights. Our privacy concerns are something that we recognize as important. And while we need to certainly ensure that we have affordable rates—

*Interruption.*

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** It's okay. You can take it if you want.

*Interruption.*

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** You know, you might as well just take it, because it's making so much noise. I don't even know how to turn it off. Thank you.



*Applause.*

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** All my thoughts and all my comments don't get any applause, but my cellphone going off does. Thank you. That's democracy for you. That's the Legislature for you.

**Interjection:** Because of Bill 60.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** All because of Bill 60.

That's an area of concern, though. In the pursuit of trying to make sure that our wireless services are more affordable, they're opening up the bidding process, and other companies will bid on it.

But this caveat that there has to be full access by local authorities for surveillance, given some of the privacy concerns that have been raised in the US around the government randomly having access to our interactions by cellphone and by email—I'm also concerned that our province and our country don't go down that route. We need to protect or find a balance between protecting our communities, protecting our societies, through strategic use of our powers, strategic use of our law enforcement but at the same time protecting individual's right to privacy. It's an important area to find that right balance. I bring that up because as we're talking about cellphones and we're talking about wireless codes and wireless agreements, we have to ensure that we have respect for the privacy of our citizens and that in our pursuit of security we don't trump our civil rights and our civil liberties—a cautionary note for members of this Legislature to consider that that's something we must protect.

All in all, it's a bill that will provide some consumer protection. I would like to see it go further by providing some means and mechanisms to actually reduce the costs for wireless services, which is one of the real issues here.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** It's my pleasure to get up and speak about Bill 60, the Wireless Services Agreements Act, which I introduced. I know my colleagues will be speaking in further debates today and beyond about the features of our bill and how it strengthens protections for consumers in Ontario. I thought, since the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton raised a couple of issues around the CRTC and different things, that I would speak to that and why our bill is different.

The proposed bill in Ontario is different and stronger in certain aspects, such as requiring all-in pricing, and also the enforcement mechanisms at this point are quite stronger in Ontario than what I understand the CRTC would propose. There are other aspects of the bill we can drill down on if we can get this to committee.

I want to say, too, that of all the legislation I've introduced this season, this one has had the most pickup, the most interest. As I've talked about before, it's early days for the CRTC. The code is largely a voluntary code. There are legal challenges to that code right now. We already heard before, at the CRTC hearings, that the CRTC themselves said that our bill can coexist with this

national voluntary code. As we know, other provinces have this kind of legislation.

The member opposite talked about complaints that have been filed with the CRTC. Those are interesting, but what is important to me is what's going on in Ontario with Ontario consumers. For the interest of the House, in 2012, my ministry received 740 complaints and inquiries about wireless services in Ontario. That's almost two a day. So I think that's what's really important.

I think we need to keep going on our bill. We are watching the CRTC thing closely, and we'll see what happens.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** The member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton, I think, spoke very well. I think he had a complete and thorough understanding of the bill he was addressing and he made very clear his position on a number of fronts.

Our side would be pretty much the same. I always think it's sort of like Shakespeare—much ado about nothing, really.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I mean that complementarily. In fairness, the Minister of Natural Resources, David Orazietti, did a lot of work on this. I have great respect for the work that Ms. MacCharles does as the minister. I mean that.

It's unanimous; we agree with it. It needs some structural changes. I'll be making some comments later this afternoon, but it should get to committee. This is another case where they're being obstructionists. They're not helping us get this stuff to committee where we can do the real work to make this place work.

With all due respect, I think the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton—as I said, he's a lawyer. His arguments were very concise and accurate and poignant to the extent of the legislation itself.

But when I go through it, really, there's a lot of stuff—this is the second attempt on this bill as well. It's important to say that, and it's important to recognize that the federal government, under the CRTC, has much of the jurisdiction under the communications.

**1650**

Because of the mobility factor of cellphones, really it should be a national plan, and I think working with the federal government, which they're trying to do, would improve the outcomes.

Now, the consistency in billing is important, the disclosure piece is important, and also that the customer service component is addressed as well. Much of this bill will need to be discussed later.

I can hardly wait for our member from Burlington and her insightful comments.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I listened intently to my colleague from Bramalea–Gore–Malton, as always, because he has a way of speaking so insightfully. He has a way of

looking at a complex issue or a multifaceted issue that goes over several jurisdictions and getting really to the nub of the issue. He got to the nub of several of the issues, talking about the rates, talking about the jurisdictions between Ontario and the federal government, and mostly I want to talk about that, because very often in this House we have long, long debates on Ontario legislation which is designed to compliment or which is in step with the legislation of the federal government. All 10 provinces, more or less, either have to, or fall into line and do it anyway, so that our laws are consistent across the country.

I think that is what needs to happen here. I think the legislation needs to go to committee, and probably will go to committee, and then we have to make sure that the legislation that is being put forward in Ontario is as strong as or stronger than the other pieces of provincial legislation and that all of it meshes with what has to happen in Ottawa.

This is a huge issue for many people. People walk around with cellphones everywhere. Even my poor friend who was up making a speech found that that cellphone will not leave him alone. I am one of those people from the old school who refuses to bring my cellphone and my BlackBerry and my computer into this hall, because I think that this is a place for debate, not a place for communications of the wireless kind. In any event, I think most of my colleagues would disagree, and most of them will have a BlackBerry with them right now. Some of them may even be using them. Perhaps the member from Eglinton—Lawrence can tell us whether or not it's being used.

But the issue is that it's everywhere and that it must be debated and we must resolve it to the benefit of consumers.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rob Leone:** I want to stand and congratulate the comments made by the member from Bramalea—Gore—Malton, who spoke for about 23 minutes this afternoon with respect to Bill 60.

I actually just wanted to say that it was kind of humorous to watch him juggle his phone and make a speech at the same time. I think we're all used to doing the multi-tasking that our job requires, but it was pretty interesting to see how the member for Bramalea—Gore—Malton tried to juggle the turning off of his cellphone. I almost rose on a point of order so that you could have a few minutes just to figure it out—unlock your phone and swipe it off.

But, you know, this is good legislation. I think the member for Beaches—East York makes a valid point in terms of trying to be in lockstep with what's happening with federal legislation that may in fact do a lot of what this bill seeks to do and seeks to accomplish.

This is an interesting field. I still think, as the member for Bramalea—Gore—Malton stated in his comments, that we should look at some of the priorities of all parties and start debating those pieces of legislation that we can

really move on. Perhaps we won't agree on all those pieces of legislation, but I would suggest that if we are focusing on legislation that helps the economy, that fixes the jobs crisis in the province of Ontario, we would be far better serving our constituents than talking about a piece of legislation that overlaps to some degree with what's happening at the federal level.

So those are my comments for now, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to enjoying the debate that we're going to have this Thursday afternoon.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Bramalea—Gore—Malton, you have two minutes for a response.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I've noted all the great comments and have ensured that my cellphone is quite far away from me at this point in time and fully shut off, so thank you. Thank you to the Minister of Consumer Services, the member from Durham, the member from Beaches—East York and the illustrious member from Cambridge as well.

I appreciate the Minister of Consumer Services addressing, I think, a very valid point that two pieces of legislation can certainly exist at the same time. My main thrust of my submission or my argument is that, given the limited time here, there are other priorities, I think, that we could bring forward. If a particular issue is already being addressed somewhere else, perhaps, if we have limited time, we should focus on other priorities.

That being said, this is certainly a concern that's raised by, I'm sure, all of our constituents. Many people have complained about these issues, and it certainly will provide a way to address those concerns.

Again, the thing that I think is quite important about this bill, and it's something I'd like to see in other bills moving forward, is that where we provide a protection or a guarantee—in this bill, we provide a number of protections. Language should be clear and transparent. We provide for certain provisions around cancelling a cellphone contract: If you cancel it, there can only be a certain amount of a cost associated with that. Where we provide these guarantees and these protections, we should also provide similar sanctions, remedies or penalties. That's what this bill does, and that's something I think is something important.

I think we need to ensure that all future bills—if they give a protection, you have to give some sort of remedy or some sort of way of enacting a penalty or sanction so that there's some strength behind the legislation. This bill does do that, and that's something I'm encouraged by. I look forward to seeing more bills with that same protection in place, that same penalty or sanction or remedy in place, so we can further strengthen our province.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** It's a pleasure to speak on behalf of Bill 60 because, as we've heard here today, it is an area of concern for many ordinary citizens of Ontario, because it's kind of surprising to notice over the last number of



years that the cellphone bill is probably more than the hydro bill. It's not unusual to see bills of \$400 or \$500 a month if you've got a couple of kids in the family. It's not unusual to see that. It's a huge financial concern, and it's just so common that every family certainly is affected by the rules and the protections and the lack of protections that exist with cellphone use. It's a new normal in Ontario where we have these devices that are part of our everyday life.

I'll be sharing my time, Mr. Speaker, with the member from Mississauga—

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** Mississauga East—Cooksville.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Mississauga East—Cooksville. I remember that I got my driver's licence in Cooksville because there was too much of a lineup in Toronto, so I had to drive to Cooksville to get my driver's licence. I always remember that. Everybody forgot: "Where's Cooksville?" "Well, it's in Mississauga." Anyway, sorry. Sorry to diverge.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** What year was that?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Oh, God. It was a 1956 Ford, I think.

Every family sees this bill that comes to their home every month, and if you look at the bill, you've got to try to look at it in detail, because there are so many line items. To try to understand the bill—it is not easy.

You can imagine, so many people in this great province don't have English as their first language. So you can see, when the bill comes, whether they're being overcharged or whether they're being given extra charges for roaming or all these hidden charges that come about, it is very difficult for an ordinary citizen to really find out if that bill is accurate.

I know that I rarely have the time or the patience to look through that bill. Thankfully, my wife has that kind of patience and looks at the detail. But it's a very complex bill that we get, not to mention the contract. I've seen those contracts, and those contracts, really—the size of the print, first of all. Who could ever make it out? Never mind understanding the legal language that is used with so many provisos that protect the company. It is really difficult to understand what you're agreeing to, and the agreements, in many cases, can lock a person up for years, if not months. You don't really know how to extricate yourself from a contract, what your rights are as a consumer and what the implications are of what you've signed.

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When you sign it is a very serious commitment you're making, and sometimes you don't realize because, as you know, Mr. Speaker, the come-on—if you go to Costco or go down to Main Street in Scarborough, up Victoria Park along Eglinton, you'll see that there's all these shops that sell these cellular plans. They say, "Zero down. You get a free phone." That's the other come-on: a free phone. So the ordinary person says, "Oh, I get a free phone if I walk in there." But essentially they hammer you when you sign up, because sure, you get a free phone, but the monthly charges are through the roof. That's misleading advertising. It's not a free phone. Basically, you're

paying for that phone in your monthly charges. But the advertising is always there about some giveaway, about the phone that's not going to be of any charge to you, and then people are in a hurry, because of the glitz of the device that you're buying with the multiple facets. They're very impressive bits of technology that are very alluring to people, so you get these phones and these devices that can do almost everything. They probably could even cook for you now, they've got so many apps on them. They've got an app for everything.

That's another come-on too, I guess. Once you get the phone and the package, then they're always pushing these apps at you: "You can get this app to do this. You can use an app to get a restaurant. You want to get the weather. You want to get the temperature in Saigon?" or whatever it is. There's an app for everything. Then, is there a charge for these extra apps? In most cases, there is. So then you're downloading apps and then that's downloaded onto your cellphone bill. There's all these things going on. It's not a contract that's fixed. It's not a contract that is, certainly, understandable.

And then it's a changing contract. There's all these charges that are changing. Then you find out, well, there's also these negative options in the contract too sometimes, where they'll send you some note saying, "Well, if you don't tell us that you don't want this service, we're going to give you this service." Most of us don't even notice that part of it. Then we've got this new service, and they say, "Well, wait a minute. I thought in the contract there wasn't anything added." "Yes, but you basically gave us permission to add on this other feature." So the complexity of these contracts requires some kind of sanity. The acceleration of the complexity is beyond the normal family's ability to deal with.

This is why, over the last number of years, there have been so many complaints coming to the Ministry of Consumer Services. When this was first raised, I know the member from Sault Ste. Marie was dealing with this, and the new member, Minister MacCharles, will tell you that, next to hot water heaters, this is where the biggest number of complaints are coming from. Because in many cases people don't know—in fact, if people knew who to call when they had a complaint about their cellphone bill, there would be more calls, because they're really confused in terms of determining who can help them with their cellphone bill. Do they go to their lawyer? Do they go to their city councillor? God forbid you should go to the offices of Rogers or Bell or one of these companies. You're not going to get any satisfaction. So the consumer doesn't know where to go for help, for information, to see, first of all, whether that bill is correct and there are no mistakes in it, that they're not being overbilled, and if there's any way of checking that that contract they signed doesn't violate their basic consumer rights.

That's why this bill is an attempt to bring in some protections. These protections are necessary. Sure, we've heard discussions about the CRTC doing this, that and the other thing, but we know that many of the things the CRTC does are either voluntary or subject to legal

interpretation. To safeguard the consumers of Ontario, it's our obligation to put these protections in for the people of Ontario.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Like other provinces.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I think there are three or four other provinces that have done the same thing. We can't say, "Well, Ottawa will take care of it," because we know, whether it's the CRTC or other things, Ontario is usually last on the list that Ottawa thinks about.

Therefore, we've got to make sure the people of Ontario have protections when it comes to these cellphone bills and wireless services, smart phones or mobile devices, whatever they're called. They're going to be more and more important, in terms of the household budget, because they're making them indispensable.

My niece, who I think was in grade 8 last year, was the only girl in grade 8 without a cellphone. My sister-in-law and brother said, "Listen, we don't want you to have a cellphone," and my niece would constantly say, "Dad, everybody else has a cellphone. I'm the only person in the class without a cellphone. I think I'm the only kid in the school without a cellphone." A lot of parents know that our children can be really addicted to these devices, and it's not necessarily a good thing—but it is good in terms of safety for kids, so you can call them. Therefore, my brother and sister-in-law gave in and said okay. For her birthday last year, they gave her a cellphone. The member for Wellington knows. He has gone through the same thing with his kids. It's hard, because you don't want them to be addicted to these devices. If I walk up any street in Toronto, I see they've all got that BlackBerry hunch. They're all walking like this. We're going to get into serious trouble if we keep on walking hunched over all the time with our cellphone or BlackBerry. We're all going to have this disease.

The thing is, they're indispensable. As I said, that's how young people, especially, communicate. A lot of people, in fact, are taking out their land lines because it's a savings. They get rid of the land lines, and all they have are cellphones. I've talked to a lot of people who've done that in the last year. They've gotten rid of the land lines and just have cellphones. Therefore, the cellphone is not a matter-of-choice consumer item; it's almost a necessity. You have to have one, whether you're in business, whether—again, the mom or dad in a family, you want your grandparents to have one for safety reasons etc. That's why there need to be some protections in place. It's not a luxury item anymore. It's not something that is an add-on anymore. It has almost become an indispensable item in all of our households.

This is why I commend the minister for being relentless and sticking to her guns—the need for our ministry of consumer affairs to protect Ontario consumers and not to leave it up to Ottawa. God forbid, if we left things up to Ottawa on so many fronts—don't get me going down that route about what Ottawa is doing for us, or to us.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Or not doing.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Or not doing.

Anyway, we need to have these kinds of protections for people. I think they're essential.

There's probably more work to be done on this front because it's a moving target. It is complex. It is challenging for all of us in terms of keeping up with this whole issue of contracts.

The good Canadian Tire English—they use Bay Street English in these contracts all the time in the billing. I say, use basic Canadian Tire English, God forbid, and print that you can see and you can read, not that pillbox print where you need a magnifying glass to see what it is. They use small, small print.

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So use good Canadian Tire English in the contracts, good-sized print, and God forbid, put a phone number or someone you can call, a human being, and not someone in Afghanistan that you have to try and explain your cellphone bill to.

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** Or Timbuktu.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Or Timbuktu. Yes, you phone Timbuktu and they tell you, "Can I help you with your cellphone?" It should be a local person who tries to help you explain that cellphone bill. That would be really helpful. God forbid they should have a real, live person who answers the phone and says—they're in the phone business and they don't have anybody to answer the phone.

Anyway, God bless. Where would we be without them? It's like the Vatican—Rogers, Bell. We bow down to them every day, and they own every baseball team, hockey team, arenas. They own everything. That's the new world order of Bell and Rogers. God forbid—

**Mr. Michael Prue:** You promised to share your time.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** The NDP is even trying to tell us how to share our time. They should talk about sharing time. You guys hog all the time and you leave out other members. Don't tell me about sharing time. You should share your time.

Anyway, I will allow my esteemed colleague, who asked for about five minutes where she wants to add to this important debate—my esteemed colleague from Mississauga—Cooksville.

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** I'm very pleased to rise and speak in support of Bill 60, the Wireless Services Agreements Act, 2013. I'd like to begin by congratulating the Minister of Consumer Services, because in a very short while she has done so much for consumer protection, whether it's payday loans, whether it's condo legislation, whether it's protecting us from door-to-door salespeople, and now with this wireless bill. Great job there, Minister MacCharles. This is a great bill.

One of the things that we struggle with as politicians is to connect with our constituents and talk to them about meaningful policy. Often I go door to door and knock on doors. You talk about policy and they tune out, but you start talking about something like this—protection on cellphone bills—and you've got their attention. That tells me that this is the kind of legislation that this government



needs to work on, so I am so pleased we are working on this.

I know some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have said that there is no need for this because the CRTC is coming up with their own code. Well, I think some of them have, after saying that, admitted that this bill does have certain provisions that the CRTC code does not, starting with all-in pricing. Speaker, I'm sure you have, on many occasions, seen an ad that says \$20 or \$19.99 for a month for a cellphone bill, but when the bill comes it's really \$35 because there are all sorts of things in there that were never advertised. So all-in pricing is definitely very timely. It is something that consumers want and it is something that the CRTC code does not have.

The other issue is stronger enforcement, and I know that my colleague from Bramalea–Gore–Malton spoke very eloquently, saying that this bill has strong sanctions that the CRTC code lacks, so again, a very good reason to proceed with this bill.

Lastly, as the minister herself pointed out, the CRTC code is being challenged, so going ahead with this bill is really important because we don't know where the CRTC code will land. Certainly, if there is some duplication we can look at it in committee, but there is absolutely no reason not to go ahead because this bill is much, much stronger than anything that the CRTC code is suggesting. It's also very important to recognize that the CRTC code is voluntary, while this bill actually has enforcement tools and will strengthen consumer protection.

I know that my colleague from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, who is not here but spoke to the bill the other day, was saying—

**Mr. Rob Leone:** Speaker, she can't say that.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I would remind the member that we do not make notations of those who are not here.

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** I withdraw on that.

Anyway, he was concerned about the lack of cellphone access and was suggesting that somehow, this bill is not important because of the lack of cellphone access. I would like to say to this House that cellphone access really is a federal issue. It is something that the provincial government can work on with the federal government. I have some experience in this area, because when I worked at the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, we were actually working with the federal government to try and get more broadband access for northern Ontario. It was unfortunate that the federal government turned down Ontario's application. So my recommendation to anybody who wants greater cellphone access in northern Ontario: Talk to your member of Parliament.

On the other issue that was also brought up, I believe by the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton, around the issue of pricing of cellphones: Again, that is not something that can be addressed through legislation; it's a free market issue. Indeed, I agree that there is a need for more competition, but again, that's a federal issue. Talk to your member of Parliament. Talk to the Prime

Minister. Send in a letter asking for more competition. But this is not the place to be discussing greater cellphone access or pricing, because those are federal issues.

Finally, I just wanted to say—and this has been talked about by other members as well—that cellphones really are not a luxury anymore. For me, it's really a safety issue with my daughter. She is 15 years old. She commutes sometimes. If she is walking through a parking lot, I'm talking to her on that phone, because that's the way I make sure she's safe, and I'm sure that each of us has done that at some point. So it really is a lot more than just communication. It has become a security tool. It has become, of course, a data tool. How many of us have used it as a GPS?

So putting all that into consideration, given that today cellphones are really a necessity, I believe that this bill is timely. I'm very, very pleased that we are bringing this forward. I hope that everybody in this Legislature will support it. I really don't know how you will be able to face your constituents if you vote against this bill, because I know that in one Ontario, whether you live in northern Ontario, whether you live in southern Ontario, whether you live in rural Ontario, everybody wants more protection when it comes to their cellphone bills. So I urge every single member to vote in favour of this bill when it comes up for debate, and I look forward to that vote.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rob Leone:** I listened intently to the debate, the comments made by both the member for Eglinton–Lawrence and the member for Mississauga–Cooksville.

I'm kind of puzzled on how to address this, because I noticed that some of the commentary made by the member for Eglinton–Lawrence actually didn't discuss the very nature of the bill. And speaking of that, he made a comment that these cellphones are obviously a necessity for a lot of people. I was interested in the news article that came out probably a few weeks ago that talked about this family from Guelph that was disappointed about the excessive use of their cellphones, and so they've made a pledge to live life like it was 1986. They got rid of their cellphones; they got rid of their tablets, their video games and so on and so forth. It's a pretty interesting story. If you haven't read the story, I think it was in the Toronto Star and other newspapers; it sort of made the rounds a few weeks ago, maybe at the beginning of September or at the end of August.

You know, there are obviously some federal issues. The overlap of the bill is a concern that we have, of course. What's the necessity of bringing a bill forward that might have some duplication with what's happening federally is certainly a concern.

I know the member from Mississauga–Cooksville asked: How could we face our constituents if we didn't vote for this bill? My question is: How are you going to face your constituents in the absence of actually talking about jobs and the economy, which is what we should be talking about in this Legislature? We see bill after bill

after bill that avoids the topic that is most important to the people in my riding, which is jobs and the economy.

So let's talk about those kinds of bills. Let's get Ontario working again. This is what we're supposed to be doing here. Let's move on with it, folks.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I listened intently to my two colleagues from the party opposite: to the member from Eglinton–Lawrence and then, all too briefly, to the member from Mississauga–Cooksville. I was trying to remind the member from Eglinton–Lawrence that he needed to give more time to the member from Mississauga–Cooksville, because I actually enjoy listening to what she has to say. I think it was only fair that she be given a greater opportunity, because I had the opportunity to meet her father this morning, and he's here in the audience watching her. He could have listened to a much better speech, I am sure, had she been given the appropriate time from the member from Eglinton–Lawrence. So I would ask in the future that he pay a little bit more deference to his colleague because what she had to say, in my view, made a lot of sense in terms of the bill.

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There's no doubt that the Liberal backbench is going to support the minister on this bill—there's no doubt. We all know that that's going to happen, and we all know that they will pick the best parts out of the bill and talk about those best parts, as she did and as the member from Eglinton–Lawrence did.

There are some good parts in the bill. No one would deny that. The only question is, how is this overlapping with the federal bill? Is it going to mesh? I don't think we're going to know that until we see how the federal bill unwinds and how the court case happens in Ottawa and until we start to listen to some of the experts coming forward to give opinions, should this pass second reading and go for the final third reading and possible proclamation. What we need to do is start listening to the people and to the experts. What we need to do is start looking at what is happening in Ottawa and around the CRTC and the court cases.

In the meantime, I thank the member from Mississauga East–Cooksville for adding to the debate. Your father should be very proud of you.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** I'd like to address Bill 60, the Wireless Services Agreements Act. Maybe just to oversimplify what this process is going to do: It's for the benefit of the buyer, the benefit of the purchaser. Finally some dialogue would be put in place that would do the appropriate job to make things safer and legible and understandable for the average man and woman going to acquire another wireless device.

It's important that there is full disclosure of goods and services. I know all of the members here are very cognizant of this bill that is before us, but some people out

there might not be aware that service providers would need to clearly explain which services are included and which would result in added charges. The suppliers would be obligated to disclose manufacturer's warranty information or if the phone supplier offers supplemental warranty coverage.

When it gets to the comprehensive, easy-to-understand agreements, let's think about contracts because they would now have to have clear disclosure of key terms consumers can understand. Companies would have to provide an agreement in a form that a consumer can keep, such as an electronic document that could be printed.

In the all-inclusive pricing, service providers would have to include the total cost of an agreement in any price advertisement so prices are transparent. The all-inclusive cost would need to be the most prominent price information shown in the advertisement. When I looked at it, I realized something that it didn't cover: Does it include tax or does it not include tax? It's something you might want to just firm up.

We look forward to having this bill passed. The minister has done a great job.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Again, comments to the Minister of Consumer Services but also to the member from Eglinton–Lawrence. I was surprised that on an important bill like this, protecting consumers' rights, he wouldn't have used all 20 minutes. It's important to get into the meat and the sinew of this bill, but he did give the member from Mississauga East–Cooksville a refreshing opportunity. She should have spent 20 minutes, especially with her father here. Welcome as well. I had an occasion to meet him earlier this morning.

But she did mention something on a personal level which I thought was quite touching. I take the GO train quite a bit. I was down at Union station one evening, and I ran into the member from Mississauga East–Cooksville with her daughter. In fact, I was quite impressed by what she said today, that the cellphone acts as an important connection for safety and security. I complimented her on the practical application of how important wireless communication is to each and every one of us. I do the same thing with my wife and members of the family.

But when I get down to the bill, though, we support the bill. I'm looking forward to our member from Wellington–Halton Hills, who will be speaking next and will get into the technical nuances of the bill. The viewer might be interested in staying tuned. This isn't program messaging. We are supportive of the bill; we need to strengthen the bill.

There are some explanations that are important: The role of the CRTC, the national, how cellphones move from Nova Scotia to BC and all over. There's a need for a federal framework here for billing and for licensing and such. I'm sure our member from Wellington–Halton Hills will bring that forward.



Again, I commend both the member from Eglinton–Lawrence as well as the member from Mississauga East–Cooksville for their comments. I look forward, on Monday, perhaps, to when I might get a chance myself to speak and bring some clarity to this discussion as well.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Eglinton–Lawrence, you have two minutes for a reply.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I want to thank my colleague from Mississauga East–Cooksville for her wonderful support of this bill, the member from Cambridge, the member from Beaches–East York, the member from Ajax, the esteemed member from Durham and the minister, Tracy MacCharles, Minister of Consumer Affairs, for her resilience, her perseverance and her determination to help working families basically pay a fair price for these services.

Right now, many of us know there's no way of knowing how fair they are or not because a lot of it is all in that fine, fine print that's complicated, that's not transparent, so this is her attempt to make sure that we make, as I said, these bills in Canadian Tire English with large print, and make big daddy Bell and big daddy Rogers accountable, because right now we're saying that the federal government is somehow going to do it. We know the federal government has got other issues on their plate, so we've got to take care of our people here in Ontario.

People in my riding of Eglinton–Lawrence care deeply about fairness and making sure they're not being ripped off. As MPPs, we have a job to protect the interests of our consumers in our ridings. I know the member from Cambridge disagrees, but I think this is why we're here: to protect the interests of ordinary working people who are being ripped off, in many cases, by these complex bills that are not understandable and not transparent. It's our job to help people get treated fairly and justly, and I commend the Minister of Consumer Affairs for standing up for these working people who deserve a fair break when they're paying good money for these wireless services. Congratulations to the minister.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I'm very pleased to have this opportunity this Thursday afternoon to participate in this debate on Bill 60, An Act to strengthen consumer protection with respect to consumer agreements relating to wireless services accessed from a cellular phone, smart phone or any other similar mobile device. That's what the title of the bill is. It stands in the name of the Minister of Consumer Services, Minister Charles.

I want to thank and compliment the minister for being here this afternoon; for being here for this second reading debate. I would encourage all ministers of all parties in all governments to listen to the second reading debate of the bills that they bring in because I think it's an important part of the process and it shows respect for the Legislature. It's always exciting to stand up on a Thursday afternoon and see such a crowded House, with

all the members anxiously participating in the debate. I think we do have a quorum, in all seriousness, but it's close. But it is good, obviously, when we have this chance on Thursday afternoon, after question period and after private members' business is disposed of, to continue with the important debates.

I would say, if this Legislature is going to be taken seriously and seen to be relevant, we have to be responding to the important issues of the day, the important issues that are on the minds of constituents, the issues that people are talking about in the coffee shops and to the extent that politics comes up at the sports arenas when people gather, when they get together in their service organizations and when they're conversing about politics at the water cooler, even at work.

Ontario faces very serious and significant problems, as we all know. When I had an opportunity to send a newsletter out to my constituents in the last few days, I reminded them of the deficit in the province of Ontario. It's \$11.7 billion this fiscal year. That's the deficit that's projected for the current fiscal year that we're in, 2013–14.

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We know that the provincial debt is projected in the Liberal budget to go up \$20 billion this year, from \$253 billion to \$273 billion: obviously an issue of serious concern. The government claims to have a balanced budget plan, that by 2018 they will have balanced the budget, yet we don't see any details which give us confidence that that is achievable at their current spending rate. Their own budget documents show that the per capita debt, which is the net debt divided by Ontario's population—in effect, the amount that each of us owes, every man, woman and children in Ontario who has to be serviced—is \$19,928 at present, almost \$20,000. A family of five, like my family, is on the hook for servicing \$100,000 of provincial debt.

Of course, as we know, the debt has increased—has doubled, virtually—since the current governing party took office 10 years ago. The interest on the debt is now the third-largest item on the provincial budget, after health care and education. It's \$10.6 billion that has to be spent this year to service the provincial debt. That's money that could be going to health care, education, any number of important government services that we all value—environmental protection, or perhaps, shall we say, tax cuts to give some relief to the hard-pressed taxpayer in the province of Ontario. That money has to go to the debt. That's all because of the overspending of past governments. This is an important issue too.

We see that the provincial government's spending this year is projected to be going up again. In spite of the fact that the government would have us believe that they are, in fact, trying to hold the line on spending, spending is actually up about \$3 billion this year—\$3.6 billion, I believe—from \$127.6 billion. Actually, it continues to go up in spite of the fact that the government would lead us to believe that they believe in restraint.

Of course, we know that the government is promising to create 30,000 new jobs for young people, but we also know that at the same time—

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** That's not about Bill 60.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Give him a chance; he'll get to it. He's just setting it up.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Well, these are important points, I say to my member for Durham. The fact is, these are important issues that are of concern to my constituents in Wellington-Halton Hills, and they want to see a response from the government on these issues too. So I bring those issues forward at the outset to remind the government of the fundamental economic challenges with respect to the budget deficit, with respect to the growing government debt, as well as the unemployment problem that exists in the province of Ontario. We call upon the government to bring forward legislation to deal with those problems too.

Now, Bill 60—I think it's important to clarify what Bill 60 is all about, Mr. Speaker. This bill creates a new act to govern wireless agreements. The government tell us, "A wireless agreement is defined as an agreement between a supplier and a consumer in which the supplier agrees to provide wireless services that the consumer can access from a cellular phone, a smart phone or any other similar mobile device, whether or not the supplier agrees to provide goods to the consumer under the agreement. The act applies to a wireless agreement and the parties to it, in addition to the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2002, that normally apply. In addition, certain provisions of that act are made applicable to a wireless agreement with certain changes. Those provisions include the power of the director designated by the minister to issue compliance orders and a prohibition against parties waiving any of their substantive or procedural rights.

"The act sets out disclosure obligations for suppliers under a wireless agreement. The obligations deal with information on the cost to a consumer that must be included in any price advertising with respect to a wireless agreement as well as extensive information that must be disclosed in an agreement itself. The latter information includes a description of the services provided under the agreement, the effect of each of the services on costs payable by the consumer and a statement of the minimum cost payable by the consumer expressed as a regular periodic amount, regardless of the consumer's usage of the services. If a wireless agreement does not meet the disclosure requirements or if the supplier does not deliver a copy of the agreement to the consumer as soon as practicable after entering into the agreement, the consumer may cancel the improperly made agreement and receive a full refund of money paid.

"The act contains other measures for protecting consumers under a wireless agreement. For example, a supplier must comply with certain disclosure requirements in order to amend a wireless agreement. A consumer is allowed to cancel a wireless agreement at any time and without any reason. The act sets limits on cancellation fees that the supplier is allowed to charge.

"It is an offence to contravene or fail to comply with a number of provisions of the act.

"The act includes authority to make regulations on matters such as specifying additional rights and obligations of consumers."

Of course, Mr. Speaker, I read from the explanatory note. This is what the government would have us believe the bill is all about, and we accept that. We support it in principle, and we would hope that when this debate concludes—and it will, at some point, after members of the opposition, members of the government and members of the third party have had an opportunity to debate the issue in full.

I think it's important to point out as well that all of us, as members of the Legislature, have an opportunity and—I would argue in many cases—an obligation to bring forward the concerns of our constituents so that those views are known during debate. The government occasionally expresses a bit of dismay and frustration I guess with the opposition parties these days because we are engaging in debate. We have enthusiasm on this side of the House, and we want to make sure that our views and those of our constituents are brought forward. I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that that's a good thing because it allows the government to fully assess the flaws and drawbacks of their legislation.

That's certainly the role of the opposition, to bring forward those expressions of concern and point out the flaws and drawbacks to ensure that the government takes a second look at the legislation before it passes into law. If there are any drafting issues or any issues that are overlooked, or if there are improvements that can be contemplated to the bill, all of that takes place. I think that's an important part of the legislative process. I would agree that the debate is important, and I'm glad to have my chance to participate in it.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that you were first elected to council in 1988 and that you've served in elected public offices uninterrupted now for some 25 years. You deserve enormous credit for that. I was thinking about that too because when I was first elected in 1990, cellphones were a lot bigger than they were today. They were almost like a brick. Initially, I didn't have one, and I didn't want one. But members of the Legislature—at some point, the Board of Internal Economy approved the expenditure for cellphones for members. I's true that over a 25-year period or thereabouts, they have gone from being this big brick that some people had in their cars—not mobile phones that you would carry around in your pocket obviously, but they were in your car. Now we have them in our pockets or attached to our belts, somewhere that they're always handy, in purses and so forth. Things really have changed in that respect. But at the same time, I appreciate what the member for Eglinton-Lawrence had to say about this, that they have come from being a novelty 25 years ago to being ubiquitous. Almost everybody has one nowadays.

My sons, who are now 18, 16 and 14—two out of three of them have a cellphone, and one wants one. We



struggled with this because we wanted to make sure that they understood the cost. We try to make sure that our boys understand the difference between wants and needs, so that they grow up as good Conservatives and understand the difference between wants and needs and, at the same time, realize that sometimes you have to save for some of the wants that you might have. We've encouraged our boys to get part-time jobs before they get a cellphone because I think obviously they need to be able to pay for the cost of having that cellphone. But I also recognize that for many parents, the use of a cellphone for their children is an important safety consideration. I obviously understand that very, very well too.

It's also important to remind the House about the situation that's faced today by an important Ontario company. It used to be Research In Motion, now BlackBerry. They are, in fact, struggling with a restructuring that is necessitated by really strong competition from other cellphone makers. It is still very exciting Ontario-made technology, and we certainly wish them all the best for their continued future as they go through this restructuring. I know it's going to be difficult, but we're very proud of the way they have put us on the map in the province of Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity about 10 years ago to meet with the Clerk of the United States Senate in Washington, DC. They were telling us about what had happened on 9/11—of course, we know the situation that the United States faced that day and the tragedy of 9/11. One of the planes that was in the air they believed was targeting either the US Capitol or perhaps the White House; they weren't sure. That was the plane that went down in Pennsylvania.

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But at the same time they were quite surprised that the communication system did not work on 9/11 in the United States or in Washington, certainly, and I guess New York as well, and the cellphone service just died. But he pulled out his BlackBerry and he said, "This is the only thing that worked on 9/11." I was quite pleased to inform him that the product was made in Ontario and actually made in my riding—in those days, I was representing Waterloo—Wellington—that there was assembly of BlackBerrys in my riding. They weren't aware that it was even a Canadian product. So I think we should be very proud of the people at Research In Motion and BlackBerry, and we certainly wish them all the very best as they continue this necessary restructuring to meet the current marketplace.

I think it's important also to acknowledge the government's points on this legislation. The government has introduced a number of public communications on this. They would want us to believe that they are bringing this bill to ensure that there are stronger rights for wireless consumers, as they call them: "Ontario Government to Introduce New Rules for Wireless Contracts and Services." They issued a press release on April 25 in advance of the introduction of the bill to inform the

general public that they're doing this. They want to be seen to be responding to consumer complaints about wireless service contracts, and that this legislation is intended to ensure that there is clear information and fewer surprises when people enter into cellphone and wireless services contracts.

They say that the province intended to introduce legislation, which has become this Bill 60, "that, if passed, would make it easier to understand the costs and terms of wireless services contracts. The legislation would also ensure wireless services providers" have clear information "before contracts are signed."

The legislation is intended to benefit wireless consumers by requiring contracts to be written in plain language—all of us understand that and all of us believe that that is in the public interest, I think; and ensuring that contracts clearly outline which services come with the basic fee and which would result in a higher bill—again, I think that clarity in these sorts of things is in the public interest and certainly in the interest of consumers, and is a necessity, really. Also, the bill is intended to require providers to get consent from the consumer before amending, renewing or extending a fixed-term contract. I think most of us would agree again that that seems fair. Certainly, the consumer should have that opportunity to provide their consent if the contract is going to change and if the supplier wishes to change it.

Enforcing a cap on the cost of cancelling a contract or no fee at all, making it less expensive for consumers to walk away from fixed-term contracts: Again, that would appear to be fair and in the public interest. I would agree that that is the case.

Our caucus, in terms of this bill, as I said earlier, does agree that this bill should pass second reading. Certainly we want to see that happen, but we will continue to debate it to ensure that the government gives it thorough examination and thought and that all members of this House have an opportunity to speak to it if they choose to do so.

I know that our critic for this piece of legislation, the member for Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, has brought forward a number of concerns during the course of his 60-minute response to the bill. Of course, as you know, Mr. Speaker, the critic for the official opposition does get 60 minutes. I was in the chair for part of his presentation. He did a good job. I think that he leads off the debate for our side very well, and we're pleased that he put a lot of our concerns on the record.

I think it's also reasonable and appropriate for me to point out that 80% of Ontarians have a mobile phone, and the Ministry of Consumer Services receives many complaints relating to wireless services. We acknowledge that and we're aware of that. We know that many complain that the contract terms are not particularly clear and people find out about surcharges only when they open their bill. We also know that other provinces across Canada, in many cases, have already established better consumer protection legislation than the province of Ontario currently has in the absence of this bill, and that

apparently the province of Quebec has established the gold standard in terms of consumer protection with respect to wireless services.

We also are aware that companies are currently allowed to charge a consumer the full cost of a multi-year contract upon cancellation, and Quebec and other provinces have limited these charges to the lesser of 10% of the remaining costs or \$50. Again, that's more consumer protection, which I think is something the government needs to consider here.

This new bill takes some of the advice that our party gave the government going back to 2012, and yet we still find that it is somewhat lacking. We would hope that many of those kinds of concerns that we would have to strengthen the bill would be discussed in committee. When that opportunity presents itself, we will certainly be participating.

The government, in its public comments on this bill and this issue, has focused on the idea of cell shock, the moment the consumer finds out about excess usage charges that he or she has incurred. We know that the previous bill the government brought forward on this issue forced the creation of a bespoke warning system. This bill delegates the task to regulations, effectively eliminating the original reason for creating the bill.

There are, in fact, free and cheap applications for monitoring voice, text and data usage that warn you when you are about to hit the monthly quota, and we are aware of that, and we believe that to be the case. We would submit that the bill should make use of this potential.

We know the bill would have to coexist with any CRTC legislation, regulations, the mandatory code of conduct the CRTC maintains. We want to ensure that Ontario consumers are not subject to a patchwork of legislation governing wireless services. Ultimately, costs in wireless services can only be brought down by competition, which is a federal matter.

In summary, I've tried to be fair in terms of acknowledging the government's willingness to bring forward this legislation. I thank the minister for being here today. I also had a chance to talk about some of the issues that are of concern to my constituents in Wellington-Halton Hills, and I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me that latitude.

Let me just conclude by saying that our caucus is certainly willing to work in co-operation with the other parties in this Legislature, in this minority Parliament, to ensure that we assess the legislation that the government brings forward in the public interest. When it's in the public interest, as we see it, and in the interests of the people of Ontario, we want to work with the government. We want to support good ideas that might come forward from other parties. Certainly, there are so many problems that the people of Ontario are facing today. We have, I think, an obligation, as well, to reach across the partisan divide that exists in this House that sometimes, unfortunately, makes debate unduly and overly personal,

instead of focusing on the issues and the merits of the various proposals.

Again, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for listening to me today. As this debate continues and concludes, I hope that we will end up with a bill that is manifestly and abundantly in the public interest of the people of Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'm pleased to speak to the Wireless Services Agreements Act and to listen to the comments from the member from Wellington-Halton Hills. Speaker, this issue is important to constituents in Davenport, and I'm sure it's important to folks around the province. It basically says that our big communication companies should be clear about the contracts that consumers are signing.

We have heard quite clearly that wireless devices are something that most people in Ontario are now using, but the service agreements that people are signing are so filled with fine print that they're difficult for most people to actually understand.

I think the intent of the bill is good: that people should have access to clear communication when they sign a contract, and that if the company does not do due diligence to make that information clear, the consumer should be able to opt out of a contract.

I would also agree with previous speakers, though, who said that this is an important bill but a small bill, and I feel like I say this very often when I stand up and speak here. There are a lot of priorities that are pressing in this province. We talk about our school system, we talk about jobs, and we talk about the health of our communities. Speaker, it does feel like this government has just run out of gas and run out of ideas, so we have these small bills brought forward for debate.

I do appreciate the comments from the member for Wellington-Halton Hills, when he told us a little bit about the history of the cellphone, how it went from a larger phone and a heavier phone to a smaller phone and so forth—

**Interjection:** Now it's getting bigger again.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** —and bigger again.

We heard some parenting tips. I'm not a parent at this point, so I don't know what it's like to have a child with a cellphone. But people tuning in at home on the parliamentary channel can always get some good information about—

**Interjection:** Good ratings tonight.

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**Mr. Jonah Schein:** Yes—some scintillating debate here at your provincial Parliament.

I'm happy to hear debate and push this through and move on to some more important things, although this is important as well.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to rise to speak in support of Bill 60. I also want to recognize and thank and



congratulate the minister for being here today but also for bringing this bill to the Legislature.

This particular bill is about strengthening consumer protection, especially for the youngest consumers in our constituencies. You know, there are young people across Ontario, and some have one, maybe two—some may have three cellphones and BlackBerrys and all the other gadgets that go with them—

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Four or five.

**Ms. Soo Wong:** Four or five—the Minister of Tourism talks about four or five.

This particular legislation is about strengthening the protection of the consumers, especially the young people in our constituencies.

This particular bill also talks about making sure the language in the contract is understandable, and we know with young consumers, their language skills, literacy—and for many of the constituents in my riding of Scarborough–Agincourt, English and French are their second languages. So we now have proposed legislation that will make sure the language is clear language that they can understand and that the terms are clearly disclosed.

If the proposed Bill 60 is passed, consumers have a right to cancel their contract within one year of signing, and the company will need to refund all the payment that has been made under the contract because the consumer did not understand the contract they signed. I have many complaints in my riding about these kinds of contracts. They don't understand, they don't know the terms of the contract and, more importantly, some of the contracts are written in language that you either need a PhD or you have to be a lawyer to understand.

For the consumers who are the youngest members in our communities, they need to understand what they are signing, and so I applaud the minister and encourage every member of this House not only to let it pass second reading but to move it to committee so that we can improve the bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I'm pleased to add a few comments in the time that remains this afternoon on the question of Bill 60.

As others have commented, this is one of these bills that had to have new life breathed into it after prorogation, and it's too bad, because it had a timeliness to it, frankly, when it was first introduced—

**Interjection:** Resuscitated twice.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** Yes. I have been reminded it had to be resuscitated twice.

But our caucus had made the decision that we would support this, as we do see it as fundamentally a consumer issue, and certainly all of us have had experience, either directly or indirectly, through family and friends, of people who have been overwhelmed by the complexity of the contract that they have signed.

A friend of mine had moved from a more populated area to a more rural area without warning her daughters about the change in roaming costs and things like that,

and the family was stuck with a huge shock. The bill was in the four figures, and when you are looking at managing the groceries and the rent, this is the kind of thing that creates a huge burden for families.

So when we're talking about the kinds of changes that this bill contemplates, I think we have to keep in mind the reality today that people feel it's important that each member of the family has a cellphone, including the children, but we have to be able to pay for it.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments? The member for Hamilton–Stoney Creek. Am I correct?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** You're close—Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

I would like to suggest to the member from Wellington–Halton Hills that he maybe dig into his pocket and get that 14-year-old that cellphone. I think it's only fair. We're a fair party, and we believe that if two have got it and one hasn't—I think the third one should get it.

In all seriousness, I certainly have been exposed for the first time. I wasn't big on BlackBerrys. I didn't know a lot about them until I started using them. I got caught up in the roaming charges one time in the States, and I got a real shock when I got back. I was thinking about going to the bank and getting another mortgage. It was really, really bad.

You have to read the fine print in these deals. It's like all the others: the gas charges and the hydro people who come around and try to sell you contracts. The secret is in the details.

I think a lot of this has gotten out of hand. I'm glad to see that the minister has brought this bill forward, because I think it's about time that these companies got realistic with the consumer. A little more fair play is in order, because a lot of people get in a lot of financial difficulties because of it. It's bad enough with the crazy hydro costs we've got and the other charges that homeowners face, without the kids coming home with \$200 phone bills that dad and mom will have to dig for because they didn't understand what they were getting into—or they pay as they go, and they wonder where their allowance went, and it's on a phone.

I think technology is great. Then again, instead of texting, I'd like more people to actually use a land line and talk, because we've lost the ability to talk to each other.

**Interjection:** Go have a coffee.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I think we need to have more coffee at Tim Hortons and more discussion.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Wellington–Halton Hills, you have two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I want to express my appreciation to the member for Davenport, the member for Scarborough–Agincourt, the member for York–Simcoe and the member for Hamilton–Stoney Creek for their comments and responses.

To the member for York–Simcoe: I'm pleased that she reminded the House of the fact that this House was prorogued for four months, from around the middle of October. We came back on February 19—four months. Of course, the government needed to pick a new leader after Premier McGuinty decided to depart this place, and it does take a little time. In terms of the management of this House and the progress and the speed of legislation, when the government sort of scolds us for wanting to debate bills, I think it's important to point out that they prorogued the House for four months and some of these bills are coming back in their third iteration. I think everybody needs to keep that in mind.

To the member from Hamilton–Stoney Creek: My son Dean will be very pleased to hear of your support for him getting a cellphone. I appreciate your suggestion, and we'll have to take that under advisement. I was very proud of him over the course of the summer. He worked part-time as a soccer referee and saved enough to buy an iPad mini. That was a good lesson for him, and that's a

lesson that I think all of us need to sometimes be reminded of: You can't buy something until you can afford to pay for it. That's a lesson that we're trying to teach our boys and perhaps a lesson that some in this House need to relearn too, Mr. Speaker.

Again, thank you very much for listening to me this afternoon. I appreciate it. I certainly want to wish all members who are here a very good weekend.

We look forward to continuing, next week, the debates on issues that are facing the province of Ontario. We have a lot to say in terms of question period next week, and I'm certainly looking forward to being here, and I hope all members will look forward to that too, so that we can work together to reach out to the promise of the future in the province of Ontario.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** This House stands adjourned until Monday, September 23, at 10:30 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1759.*



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

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Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

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Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
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Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
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Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke–Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa–Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley–Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga–Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton–Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough–Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe–Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa–Sud	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Holyday, Douglas C. (PC)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
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MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Millroy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	York–Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
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Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
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Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
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Jagmeet Singh  
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Cheri DiNovo, Ernie Hardeman  
Helena Jaczek, Jane McKenna  
Paul Miller  
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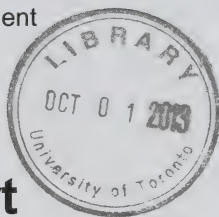
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**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature



**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Monday 23 September 2013**

**Lundi 23 septembre 2013**

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 23 September 2013

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 23 septembre 2013

*The House met at 1030.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.  
*Prayers.*

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure to welcome a number of members from the Council of Ontario Construction Associations: Harold Lindstrom, Gary van Bolderen, Ron Johnson, Gordon Sproule, Sandra Skivsky, Roger Hubbard, Doug Duke and Ian Cunningham.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On behalf of the member from Mississauga–Brampton South and page Aly Muhammad Mithani, mother Nadia Mithani and father Amin Mithani are guests in the gallery. We welcome them on behalf of the member from Mississauga–Brampton South.

### LEGISLATIVE INTERNS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I would like to introduce you to some special guests in the Speaker's gallery. It's this crop of interns that are coming here to choose which members are going to be employing them: Emily Barrette, Jessica Behnke, Lauren Millar, Mitchell Davidson, Aaron Denhartog, Amanda Garofalo, Douglas Wong, Melinda Munding, Taylor Lew and Vanessa Dupuis, and of course, OLIP director Henry Jacek.

Thank you for joining us today. We wish all the interns all the luck in the world. Someday maybe the Speaker can get an intern—I don't know. Who knows? We'll talk about it.

Also in the gallery is my son Joe. We're glad you're here today, Joe.

He's got my wife's looks, not mine.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beat you to the punch, didn't I?

It is now time for question period. The leader of Her Majesty's loyal opposition.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Thanks. I appreciate that. Thank you. Thank you very much. You're very kind.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Thanks. Good to see you, man.

Well, thank you very much. I guess you had a good weekend, too. I think we had a good weekend. It worked out all right.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### GOVERNMENT'S AGENDA

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I'm not going to let them take my time, Speaker. My question is for the Premier: Premier, we believe it's time to clear the decks and get on with the big issues in the province. That's to create jobs, grow our economy and get government spending within our means.

We have a motion on bills that you and I talked about to clear them out of the way so we can focus on the big issues. If we do that, what bill are you bringing forward tomorrow to help create jobs in the province of Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I am very pleased that the Leader of the Opposition has seen that it is possible for us to find some common ground to actually move forward on some legislation that we both agree on. I'm very, very pleased, and I commend him for putting forward the motion. It's very detailed. I know the House leaders are going to be talking about it.

I will suggest that some of the legislation, like the waste reduction legislation, is exactly the kind of economic, job-creating legislation that we need to work on together.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** No, I think our concern is you're going to actually kill jobs and reduce innovation in our economy with that legislation, but nonetheless, here's the point: These bills are prepared to move through the Legislature with alacrity because we need to focus on jobs and the economy.

Premier, you've made the case that your priorities for the legislative agenda are when teens can access tanning beds and rules around water heater salesmen. We support those bills—let's get them through—but then you say—well, what is left of your legislative agenda? It has been nine months of endless conversations and endless consultations.

I ask you a direct question. If we clear this stuff aside, if we open up the session, give me one bill that you're bringing forward tomorrow to actually get spending within its means or to create jobs. Where's the agenda?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.  
Premier?



**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure, actually, whether it's today or tomorrow, but the piece of legislation we're going to be bringing forward, as it happens, is to increase the employer health tax exemption. In fact, what that piece of legislation would mean is that the exemption would be increased from \$400,000 to \$450,000 starting January 1, 2014. This would have a positive impact and in fact would allow more than 60,000 employers across Ontario to have that break, including 12,000 that would no longer pay the EHT. That provides space, allows them to hire more people. That's a job-creating piece of legislation. I hope we'll have their support.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** It's interesting. After nine months—you went on a hand-holding exercise across the province, lots of consultations, but Premier, it's time to get on with the job and it's time for action. It's time to focus on the big issues.

You've made the case throughout the summer that your top priorities were tanning-bed legislation and legislation around water heater salesmen. We think it's time to move those aside and focus on the big issues.

We have a bill right now sitting in committee for an across-the-board wage freeze to make sure government spends within its means. We have a bill to get energy rates under control by stopping the wind turbines across the province of Ontario. We have a bill to get rid of the College of Trades so young people can actually get a good job in the trades.

If your cupboard is bare, will you move forward with our agenda and actually put people back to work, businesses back to creating jobs and our books back in balance in this great province of Ontario?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** While I appreciate the Leader of the Opposition's new-found willingness to work with us on some pieces of legislation, what I need to say is that I don't think that protecting young people from getting cancer or protecting consumers are trivial things. I think those are very important.

At the same time, we are taking action. There is a reverse trade mission happening right this morning, a global trade forum, where people from around the globe are here looking at Ontario. We're making connections between those businesses, and those relationships are going to create jobs.

I understand that the opposition doesn't value relationships. I would suggest that the fact that we've been able to have conversations over the last few months means that we're actually going to be able to move some legislation through. It's working.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The shouting is going to stop, and I'll stop it as quickly as I possibly can if I have to do it.

New question.

1040

## ORDER OF BUSINESS

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is also for the Premier. You've had nine months as Premier of this province. You presented my leader, Tim Hudak, two weeks ago with a list of six government bills that you wanted to see through the House, and three private members' bills from our side. We're agreeing with you today through a programming motion.

I should add that 90% of those bills aren't of your making; they're left over from Dalton McGuinty's government. They're housekeeping bills. They do nothing to help the over 500,000 women and men who woke up this morning without a job.

So let's not have any more conversations, because that could go on for days. Let's get your commitment now to support our programming motion, clear the decks and get on with talking about jobs and the economy.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I've already said I think it's a very good thing. The very reason that I presented that list of bills to the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, was to say, "Let's get on with these pieces of legislation," because there is a lot more work to do—things like getting the Waste Reduction Act passed, things like getting the employer health tax exemption passed.

My hope is that if we can act on these bills that I presented to the Leader of the Opposition, then maybe on some of these other things we can get some co-operation, too, because I agree with the Leader of the Opposition: We do need to create jobs. We are creating jobs. That's what the global trade forum is about this morning. That's what legislation that we're introducing into this House is about. I look forward to their support.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Premier, in spite of telling the media and the public that you've been trying to work with us and then blaming us for holding up the legislative agenda, nothing could be further from the truth. The only programming motion that you brought forward was in cahoots with the NDP. We were cut out of that—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. I expect the same on all sides.

Please finish.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** You've never had a conversation with us about speeding up the legislative agenda and getting on to talking about jobs and the economy—never—so we took the initiative today to do it for you.

So just say yes. Let's move forward; no more conversations. There are no tricks in the motion. It has been approved by the Clerks. Just say yes, Premier.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock.

Be seated, please. Be seated, please.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I look forward to the House leaders talking about the programming motion. I think it's a step in the right direction.

No matter what the member of the opposition says, the fact is that we have found a way, because I have had a number of conversations with the Leader of the Opposition, because I've presented the notion that somehow there might be a way of moving through some of these pieces of legislation where there was agreement.

If they need to take credit for that, Mr. Speaker, so be it. The fact is, we're going to move these pieces of legislation through, and I'm very pleased that the Leader of the Opposition has taken me up on my offer.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Premier, the only ones showing leadership around here are Tim Hudak and the Ontario PC Party.

I'm going to ask, on behalf of my leader and caucus, this afternoon for unanimous consent, so if you can't make up your mind now, you've got two hours and a half. We hope that we will get unanimous consent to introduce that motion. If we don't get unanimous consent, then we hope, by the end of the day, that your government House leader will introduce the programming motion, that we clear the decks and we get on with talking about jobs and the economy and start working for the people of Ontario and the unemployed of Ontario. They deserve nothing less.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock.

Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, this is a very positive development. I know the House leaders are going to have this conversation. It's exactly what I think needs to happen. There needs to be a coming together on some of these things that are important. Make no mistake: The members of the opposition can diminish these pieces of legislation, but protecting young people from cancer and protecting consumers against fraud are very, very important initiatives.

I hope that, given this exchange, we will see that the opposition will work with us on things like the employer health tax exemption, which is a direct job creator, and I look forward to their support.

#### COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. Can the Premier tell us what her priorities are for the legislative session?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I think the leader of the third party knows that we are right now in the throes of implementing many of the priorities that we put forward in the budget. We identified priorities, and we worked with the leader of the third party and with the third party to make sure that we put those pieces in place. We had already identified investment in home care. We had already identified investment in infrastructure. That is the kind of strategy—investment in people, investment in infrastructure and investment in and support of businesses—that will create jobs.

That's what the global trade forum is about this morning: connecting our businesses with businesses overseas, expanding our export capacity and creating jobs here in Ontario. That's our priority, and that's what we're working on.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Families have made it clear to us that they want to see results that create jobs, that improve health care and make everyday life more affordable for them. We want to deliver those results for them.

This morning, the Conservatives put forward their priorities for the session, including a bill that will help one single company out of their obligations to their employees. Now, it's clear that their priority is delivering results for EllisDon. Can the Premier tell us what her priority is?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I just want to say to the leader of the third party that I think she knows full well that our priority on this side of the House is creating jobs and helping people in their day-to-day lives. We have been very clear about that since before we introduced the budget, and we continue to focus on that strategy: investment in people, investment in infrastructure, and support and investment in the businesses that are going to create those jobs, the small and medium enterprises particularly, which is where the job creation is happening.

On the piece of legislation that the leader of the third party is talking about, there is a situation that arose in the 1950s, Mr. Speaker. It is an anomalous situation, and it's something that we believe needs to be addressed.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The people who make Ontario work every day sent us here to work hard for them, not for well-connected Liberal and Tory lobbyists who are working overtime to get legislation passed that will help exactly one single company. They have a pretty simple question for their Premier: Is her priority delivering results for them or working with the Conservatives to deliver results for EllisDon?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Again, I think the leader of the third party knows full well that it is my responsibility, my intention and my objective to deliver results for the people of Ontario across this province, and that means we are working with labour and we are working with business. It means that driving a wedge between labour and business, and somehow suggesting that to work with business in any capacity somehow does not



work in the best interests of people in the province—that's just not the case.

Businesses create jobs. Jobs are what people in this province need, so we're going to continue to work with business and the labour sector in partnership so that we can create the jobs the people around this province—all over the province—need.

#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also for the Premier. People are looking for results that help them, not just well-connected insiders. Hector lives in Brampton, and like many drivers, he's tired of paying some of the highest auto insurance premiums in Canada. He's retired. He hasn't had a claim in 15 years. He hasn't bought a new car, but this year he saw his insurance go from \$1,350 to \$1,700. That's more than a 20% increase. What does the Premier have to say to drivers like Hector who are seeing their premiums go up rather than down?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I would say to Hector, and I would say to people in constituencies around the province, that over a year ago, I identified auto insurance as an issue, something that needed to be addressed. I held a round table in my own riding. I had experts come, and we talked about the issues of geography associated with auto insurance rates. I talked about it during my leadership. It is included in our budget, and we are tackling that change. We know that auto insurance rates need to come down, and we need to take costs out of the system in order for that to happen.

The leader of the third party suggests that somehow that can happen overnight, that those changes can be immediate. That is just not the case. We are working with the industry. The leader of the third party knows that our target is a 15% reduction, and we will make that happen.

1050

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Avtar also lives in Brampton. This year, he watched as his premiums increased by nearly \$400, up to \$4,400 a year. That's an increase of 10%. Avtar doesn't have any new claims, and he's driving the same car this year as he was driving last year.

At the same time as the Premier is helping insurance companies maintain generous guaranteed profits, she's leaving drivers like Avtar paying more. Is the Premier going to make sure that drivers like Avtar actually see some relief?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** We have made a commitment that we are targeting a 15% reduction—average reduction—across the province, Mr. Speaker. Again, I think the leader of the third party knows that it is not immediate—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** And, as my colleague says here, there is no silver bullet on this. We have to remove costs from the system. We have to work with the industry, because the task force recommendations on

fraud reduction are fundamental to getting at why the costs are going up.

So we're going to work with the industry. We're going to remove those costs, and we have targeted a 15% average reduction across the province. That is what we will deliver, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** It seems to me this government already removed \$2 billion of costs annually in the last couple of years for insurance companies, and they're not passing it on to drivers.

Here's what people see: When it comes to protecting the profits of insurance companies, the government is ready to work very, very hard. When it comes to delivering results for well-connected insiders, the government is also ready to work hard. But when it comes to delivering results for everyday people, the government is dragging its feet.

When is this Premier going to make delivering results for people like Avtar and Hector a priority for a change?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Well, the interests of the people that the leader of the third party is talking about are our priority, as they are for the people of the province, all of the people of the province who are burdened by some of these costs. I understand that.

In fact, in 2012, auto insurance rates, on average, went down by about 0.03%. I know that's not a huge amount, but that is movement in the right direction. Remember, we are talking about average decreases, and that is our target: to reduce, on average, auto insurance rates by 15%.

Since 2003—because there have been many changes made—the rates have moved at a slower pace than inflation. So the rates have not increased as quickly as they did prior to that.

We will continue to work with the industry. It is absolutely our intention to reduce rates by 15% on average. That's the target; that's what we will aim for.

#### INVESTMENT IN ONTARIO

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** My question this morning is for the Premier. Good morning, Premier.

You've been on the job now for nine months, yet Ontario's economy is only staggering along. You'd think that a new Premier would want to put forward some concrete suggestions to get the 600,000 men and women who woke up this morning without a job back to work. But so far, we've seen nothing: nothing to create new jobs, nothing to give confidence to investors, nothing to put a lid on skyrocketing energy prices that send businesses fleeing from our province.

Premier, a show about nothing may work as a TV sitcom, but it's a lousy way to run this province. Where is your jobs-and-economy plan?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I wish the member opposite had been at Ford in Oakville last week when we announced a \$70.9-million investment that will protect

2,800 auto sector jobs and in fact will allow Ford the flexibility to be able to compete globally. That is the point of that investment. Ford is investing \$700 million. We're putting in \$70.9 million. The federal government is putting in the same.

That kind of support is part of our strategy. It's the investment in people, it's the investment in infrastructure and it's the support for businesses like Ford that is going to create jobs, that's going to protect jobs, and that is going to allow Ontario to continue to recover better than most jurisdictions in North America.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Back to the Premier: Canada's corporations are sitting on \$500 billion in reserves. Much of that is here in Ontario, where your high taxes, high energy rates and strangling red tape are forcing these companies to sit on that money. They're not investing in Ontario because business likes certainty. They're not investing in Ontario because they continue to hear you say one thing but always do the opposite. They know that our deficit is larger than every other province's combined. They see that you have no plan to rein in spending, no plan to create jobs and no plan to change the course that's dragging Ontario down.

Premier, isn't it clear that your tired team has run out of gas, run out of ideas and run out of time?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Obviously, I have to disagree with the member opposite. He needs to do his research, because the reality is that on a per capita basis, Ontario is the number one destination in North America for foreign direct investment.

In fact, since the bottom of the recession in June 2009, we've created almost 500,000 net new jobs. Some 90% of those jobs are full-time jobs; almost 80% of them are in the private sector.

Even today, we have a global export forum where more than 600 Ontario businesses are together with 20 investors and 20 buyers from the Asia Pacific region, and they are working together to further Ontario's exports as well as investment between that region—an important, growing region—and this province.

The fundamentals are completely opposite. We are thriving. We're creating jobs. We had almost a record number of jobs created last month. I don't know where he's getting his—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

#### MEMBERS' PRIVILEGES

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, last August you said to the media that you thought it was right and that the members of the justice committee should be allowed to ask questions in regard

to the motivation of why Liberal staffers sent emails saying that they were going to try to interfere with the Speaker.

We're going to be moving a unanimous consent motion a little bit later—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please.

I do get a sense of where the member is trying to go. I would ask him to rephrase his question without including any references to an already-dealt-with issue. If you can find a way to say that, I'll allow it; if you continue, I'll not allow it.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Thank you, Speaker.

To the Premier: My question is, are you going to support a unanimous consent motion that does essentially what you said and what you promised would happen, last summer, when asked by the media in regard to asking questions about the motivation of those who wrote those emails?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Cognizant of some of the warnings that you've already given us in the past, I think I will simply review what happened.

There was an exchange that took place at the committee. There was concern; there was discussion amongst the House leaders, and it was decided that the opposition would go forward with a point of privilege. You have ruled on that point, Mr. Speaker.

What I have said to the House leaders, and what I think the Premier has said, is that we would consider any sort of suggestions that come forward as long as they align with that ruling. The one that was shared by the New Democratic Party, in my opinion, does not align with the ruling that you brought forward, which is why we are not accepting it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Premier, first of all, your word is the most important thing that you have in the business that we're in. When the Premier of Ontario says, "I cannot understand why members of the justice committee can't ask these questions," it brings into question that word.

What this motion does is it says that, in fact, we don't want to deal with what happened with the Speaker in regard to his decision. We want to talk to the motivation of what those people were all about.

I ask you again: Are you prepared to support the unanimous consent motion that would allow us to have people come before the committee and deal with what their motivation was, not with what the Speaker has decided?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Again, there was concern on all sides of the House of the ruling that was made by the Chair of the justice committee, not from a procedural point of view—I think the ruling was very much in order—but its implications.

We had discussions, and there were two routes forward: One was to work something out amongst House



leaders around the scope of the committee; the other was to bring forward a point of privilege.

The opposition House leader brought forward a point of privilege. Mr. Speaker, you gave a very clear ruling, and as I said, anything that comes forward has to be looked at in the context of your ruling.

I have looked at the motion brought forward, and in my mind, it does not align with the ruling that you brought forward. I am very cognizant, Mr. Speaker, that you've asked us to leave it at that in our exchanges here in the Legislature.

### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** My question is to Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment. We all know that BlackBerry has been a strong pillar of the ICT sector in the Kitchener-Waterloo region, a company that has also spawned growth in the Ottawa region, providing jobs to many constituents in my riding of Ottawa-Orléans.

1100

Recent reports coming from BlackBerry late last week have people across this province and in my riding asking questions about the next steps for the company, particularly with regard to how many job losses this would cause in the province.

Could the minister please provide the House with an update on the situation at BlackBerry and inform us here on what our government is planning to do to help those workers affected by these job losses?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Thank you to the member from Ottawa-Orléans for this important question.

Mr. Speaker, there's no doubt that this is an extremely challenging time, not just for BlackBerry but particularly for the employees, the individuals that are employed at that Ontario company. Because of the changes that have been taking place at BlackBerry over the past number of years, we've already been working with the region closely, with the municipality, the regional leaders, of course the business leaders as well, and great organizations like Communitech that we've supported for a number of years, to make sure that we're providing re-employment and training services to former BlackBerry employees. We've been doing that for some time. In fact, we are extending the program that we have in place further into next year so we can specifically deal with the challenge that we're facing.

But I have no doubt that the people of Waterloo and the people of that entire region are up to this challenge.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** Thank you, Minister, for the update. The minister is absolutely right: It is never easy when losing a job. I would like to join the minister in sending my support to the families affected by these layoffs.

Despite this challenge for BlackBerry, I think we can all agree that the ICT sector in Ontario has seen significant growth in the last decade, something we can all be

proud of. But with these job losses at BlackBerry and significant profit losses for the company, what impact could this potentially have for Ontario and the ICT sector in particular?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Despite the challenges that BlackBerry is facing, we need to put it in context. We need to understand that Ontario is the third-largest jurisdiction in North America for the IT sector. There are more than 250,000 people in this province that are employed in this sector, including 30,000 in the Waterloo region alone.

Mr. Speaker, there are great opportunities. There are almost 1,000 firms in the Waterloo region that are involved in the tech sector. No doubt that BlackBerry is an important pillar of that, and it was an important part of building the ecosystem that exists in that region. But to give you an example, there are 1,000 tech jobs which are currently unfilled in the Waterloo region alone today, so we're confident that a lot of the employees that will unfortunately be laid off from BlackBerry will find opportunity within the region, within the sector, a sector that, by the way, contributes \$30 billion to the province of Ontario—5% of our GDP, and as I mentioned, a quarter of a million Ontarians involved.

### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier, but I don't mind if she directs it to the transportation expert from Winnipeg.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Order. I want to take this time to remind the member and all members that we always refer to each other either by our riding or by our title, nothing else.

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** The federal government has announced support for the subway plan supported by the city of Toronto, the TTC and the residents of Scarborough. My question, Premier, is when will the Liberal government quit playing politics with this issue and support the subway supported by everybody else?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Well, for the second time this morning, I'm happy to say that our actions have produced results. The fact is, having \$1.4 billion on the table being committed to building a subway in Scarborough has meant that the federal government has come forward and has stepped up, so that's a very good thing.

What I hope is that this means that now the federal government will understand that not only is it important to build transit in the city of Toronto but in Brampton and in Oshawa and in York region, across the whole region, in a systematic, not an ad hoc, way. We need that partnership.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** I'd like an answer to my question of last week. I told you that Conservative governments under four Premiers opened 64 subway stops,

and till this point, under two Premiers—you being one of them, Ms. Wynne—your government has opened none. When are you going to open your first subway stop?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The member opposite knows full well that the Spadina line is being built, the extension is being built. He knows full well that the Eglinton Crosstown line is being built, and that the Eglinton Crosstown would have had many stations open had the party opposite not filled in the hole, Mr. Speaker. I think the member opposite knows that.

The fact is, I am pleased that the federal government has seen the benefit of working in partnership. I hope this will lead to a systematic approach to building transit infrastructure in this region, across the province and, as I said at the Council of the Federation, across the country because we need a federal government that understands that investing in infrastructure, having a transportation and a transit strategy for every part of this country—never mind all of the problems—is very important. So I hope that this is the beginning of that kind of partnership.

#### CHILD CARE

**Miss Monique Taylor:** My question is to the Minister of Education. On Friday, a freedom-of-information request revealed that the Vaughan home daycare where two-year-old Eva Ravikovich died last July had meat contaminated with listeria in its refrigerator. Were complaints about contaminated and potentially lethal meat among those that your ministry never followed up on?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** My heart does go out to the family of the child in this incredibly difficult time.

I think it's important for the Legislature to recognize that the area in which my ministry is authorized to act is within the realm of the number of children who are at an unlicensed daycare. In fact, since this incident, we have applied for an injunction and have been granted a temporary injunction to prevent this particular provider from operating a daycare anywhere in Ontario.

Because this is before the courts waiting for the hearing of permanent injunction, I cannot comment any further on the specifics.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** The freedom-of-information report shows that when the Ministry of Education inspectors finally visited the daycare last November, they were refused entry for 20 minutes. The ministry's manager for licensing speculates that the operator moved children next door while the inspectors were waiting. If the inspectors had gone in right away, they may have found 27 children and they may have closed that daycare immediately, perhaps saving that child's life.

How many children's lives has this government put at risk because of its toothless inspection of home-based daycares?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I repeat that my ministry has applied for an injunction in this particular case.

But I think in terms of the ongoing public policy, we have stated publicly that one of the problems with the

existing Day Nurseries Act is, in fact, that my ministry has very little authority with respect to unlicensed day-care. In fact, the need to go to court is problematic, and we have committed to making amendments to the legislation to find a more effective process to intervene in the future.

#### SOCIAL SERVICES

**Mr. John Fraser:** My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. As a new member in the Legislature, I've quickly learned our role here and I know that the role we all play back home in our communities is vital to our work here. I enjoy this the most—to connect with my constituents and learn of their successes and their challenges and how the work we do is making a positive change in their lives. As members, we get an opportunity to hear about what we can do better and how we can improve the quality of services provided by our government.

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I know from the news that I saw over the summer that the Minister of Community and Social Services was also connecting with people right across Ontario, including in my hometown of Ottawa. Can the minister tell us about some of the communities he visited and what he has heard that can truly improve the policy formed by our government?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I want to thank the member from Ottawa South. He has, in fact, over the last 14 years been connecting with constituents, and I suspect that that's why they sent him here.

I did have a busy summer. I met with some 173 groups over a six-week period: individuals, businesses, community groups, advocates, clients, parents, agencies, workers, union leaders, municipal leaders and even a couple of First Nations communities. I did that because I wanted to learn directly a little bit more about how the services we provide impact people and how we can improve them.

I'll never forget the experience of visiting some of the people across the province with a developmental disability, who live with dignity and respect in their communities with the help of supports provided by Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John Fraser:** As the minister's example demonstrates, it's important to listen and witness the everyday lives of Ontarians. Some of the stories are not only truly remarkable, but inspiring. I am glad to know that our government is making the right investments in people and improving their lives every day.

As mentioned earlier, the minister visited my hometown of Ottawa, and I appreciate him taking the time to meet with the people of our city and learn some of the innovative ideas that might be leading, and how they can be used across Ontario. Can the minister tell us of his visit to Ottawa and what he was able to see that could be used across the province?



**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I'd be delighted, but I'd be remiss if I didn't confess straight up that Ottawa is one of my favourite cities.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** Thank you. While I was there, I had a chance to visit a number of places. I got to drop into the Causeway Work Centre, an entrepreneurial social enterprise venture that's doing some really good work, and the Ottawa DSO drop-in centre, with its focus on skills development.

I also visited one of the municipal service delivery centres. Ottawa has probably got one of the most sophisticated social delivery systems in the province. It's something I think we can learn from, and I intend to visit back to see just what additional learnings we can gain from them.

There are a lot of things that our government could do to make things better. I was impressed with what Ottawa had to offer, and will gladly visit that city to learn some more.

#### AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

**Mr. Frank Klees:** To the Minister of Health: Here's what the president of the largest provider of fixed-wing air ambulance services to Ornge told the public accounts hearing last Wednesday: "Questionable and unethical business practices still exist at Ornge."

Allegations of inherent conflict of interest, coercion by Ornge senior executives of proponents during the bidding process, little—if any—operational oversight by Ornge of its private sector aviation suppliers and no requirements whatsoever for proponents to prove that they have the financial capacity to deliver on their contractual obligations—I ask the Minister of Health, are any of these revelations about what is going on at Ornge today under its new executive of concern to you, or will you simply accept them as—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.  
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I can assure the member opposite that Ornge is taking these allegations very, very seriously. They are investigating them. I think it's important to understand that Ornge is into a new chapter. We are seeing the evidence of that in their commitment to put patients first and to enhance transparency and accountability. They value these principles, and they are acting on them.

I think it's important to acknowledge that our front-line staff at Ornge put their lives at risk every single day, making sure people get the care they need. When patients need to be transported, the people at Ornge are there.

As I say, Ornge is taking these allegations very seriously and is looking into them.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Speaker, that's precisely why we're concerned about this, because we support those front-line people at Ornge: the paramedics, the pilots and the people who are doing the front-line work.

What we're concerned about are the allegations in the executive suites of this organization that suggest there's conflict of interest that's rampant. We're told by Mr. Rick Horwath, the president of Air Bravo, that the president and CEO is fully aware. We were told that the chief operating officer has actually allowed his confidential emails to be distributed to his competitors.

Speaker, this is the executive suite—the executive suite that the minister assured us was being cleaned up. We want to know: Will she order an independent investigation of what is going on in the executive suites at Ornge? Will she confirm that for us today?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.  
Minister of Health.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, as everyone in this House knows, there is new leadership in place at Ornge. They have impeccable credentials, and they are working very hard to ensure that the patients who need Ornge get the care they need.

I'm not the only one who thinks that Dr. McCallum is in fact an excellent leader. I have a quote here: "I think that ... Dr. McCallum brings a brand new perspective to openness and transparency." Precisely, Speaker. That quote is from Frank Klees on March 20, 2013.

I know the member opposite has a great deal of respect for Dr. McCallum. Let's let him do his work.

#### THUNDER BAY GENERATING STATION

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Minister of Energy. This government has got its wires crossed when it comes to the power needs of the northwest. Last week, the Minister of Energy sent some very mixed signals to the people of Thunder Bay. He said, "Any future generating plant in Thunder Bay will be used six hours per year."

Is this government looking for fresh excuses not to honour its commitment to convert the Thunder Bay generating station to gas, or is the minister ready to admit that he got his facts wrong?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to speak to this issue again. First of all, I want to say that already there is a conversion under way, and the Atikokan plant will be available next year for 200 megawatts. There is significant—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** We're already in procurement for the east-west tie line, to bring another 400 megawatts or 500 megawatts into the Thunder Bay and northwestern Ontario area.

Investments are being made, but the good news is that more investments are going to be made, and the draft plan for northwestern Ontario energy is circulated. Everybody in the north—the task force has it; Thunder Bay has it. We're waiting for some response on that, and we expect to get that response soon. We shared that with them at the AMO conference around August 20, last month. We're waiting for the response.

We are committed to having energy in Thunder Bay and northwestern Ontario when they need it and in the amount that they need.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** People in Thunder Bay have been waiting a long time to hear some straight answers from this government. Instead, they have a minister who claims the plant is only working six hours a year when in fact it's 70 times as much. They have a minister who wrote to me to say that the plant is running at 4% capacity when it's much, much more. They have a minister who promised answers in "three or four weeks," then promptly took it back and, at the same time, told Thunder Bay citizens to get ready for a long, long wait.

Is the minister's confusion a case of the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing, Speaker? Or is it simply a sneaky way of pulling the plug on the Thunder Bay generating station gas conversion?

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**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I don't think it would be an exaggeration to say that the leader of the third party is playing politics with this issue, Mr. Speaker. I wouldn't dare say that. The task force that has produced the draft report has a massive investment strategy for northwestern Ontario. We're already creating new generation in Thunder Bay. We have not made a final decision on Thunder Bay at this particular point. We are still awaiting—I would remind the leader of the third party that we have not had all the results back in from Thunder Bay and the task force in terms of the response to the northwest draft plan. It is an extensive promise of investment. We're doing it. We're going to continue to do it. Thunder Bay has nothing to fear about the reliability of their electricity.

#### EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

**Mr. Grant Crack:** My question is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

**Interjection:** A hard-working minister.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** He's very hard-working.

There are many youth in my riding of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell with skills and knowledge wanting to contribute to Ontario's workforce. Yet with the youth unemployment rate at 9% higher than Ontario's overall average, unfortunately, many of these talented young individuals struggle to find good opportunities for employment. This is very challenging not only to the youth but also to their parents and to the families involved. I'm also concerned that there need to be supports in place to help the youth in these situations.

Speaker, through you to the minister, what is this government doing to ensure that our young people have access to good jobs and opportunities to gain workplace experience?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Not only do I agree with the member on the importance of this question; I've got to admit he's got a very good selection in ties. I think we're

completely matching today, which means we're one and the same when it comes to this issue.

Ensuring our young people have opportunities in our economy is a top priority for our government. That's why we created the Youth Employment Fund to offer young people an opportunity to gain some real work experience and learn work skills while earning an income. I'm very pleased to share with Ontario youth that applications for this exciting program are now available across the province. The Youth Employment Fund will help to provide access to much-needed workplace experience for 25,000 young people across Ontario.

Through this fund, we're also making a special effort to help youth facing barriers, including aboriginal, rural and northern youth, youth with disabilities, newcomers and visible minorities, and youth leaving care or on social assistance.

Mr. Speaker, 25,000 young people are going to get an opportunity because of this—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Grant Crack:** Thank you, Minister. It's good to hear that the Youth Employment Fund will be helpful to thousands of youth across the province. I'm reassured that we're making a special effort to assist youth who face different barriers when trying to find good jobs and workplace experience, especially in small towns and rural communities like I have in my riding of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell.

I've heard that the proposed federal changes to training funding may impact some of these programs that target youth who face greater barriers. As our government steps up our efforts to help these youth find work, it would be unfortunate if the federal government was taking measures that could harm those efforts. Can the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities please advise if these federal funding changes will hurt those youth who need these programs the most?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I wish I could say otherwise, but the fact is that the member does have reason to be concerned. Actually, all of us have reason to be concerned. The federal government plans to cut 60% of the funding that goes to the labour market agreement which funds programs that, among other things, target youth with greater needs. This is how they intend to fund their Canada Job Grant program. On top of that, they're demanding that the provinces match that amount. That could mean a \$232-million hit to programs that target aboriginal and rural youth, and literacy and basic skills programs that target at-risk youth, among others.

We believe this is a counterproductive approach and we urge the federal government to rethink this course of action. I also encourage all members, service providers across the province and all Ontarians to contact their local MPs and join me and this government in urging the federal government to work with the provinces to find a better way to fund their new program.



## RENEWABLE ENERGY

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** My question today is for the Minister of Energy. The Auditor General's report, the Fraser report and now last week's C.D. Howe report all have one thing in common: They all have denounced your government's green energy plan, Minister. In fact, the C.D. Howe Institute said, "The Ontario power sector today has oversupply ... rising prices to final consumers," as well as "volatile and contradictory policies...."

"Ontario's approach to power sector investment and planning is inefficient, expensive and ... unsustainable."

Minister, when will your government finally wake up, look at the facts and accept that the green energy plan is nothing more than a pretty name on an ugly and expensive piece of legislation?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, what we're talking about essentially here is renewable energy. There other people who want to speak about renewable energy as well; for example, the minister of external affairs for Canada, John Baird. He was down in Washington, and because he was sensitive about President Obama's impression of the federal government in terms of carbon footprint, he was very, very quick to point out that Canada has the best record in North America of eliminating dirty coal-burning generation. Minister Oliver has said the same thing. Well, strange that when Mr. Baird was Minister of Energy in that government—the PC government—he was building more coal generation plants than anybody else in North America.

We're proud of our record. We're making a healthier economy. We're making a healthier population, and it's the right choice.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I have to tell you and the minister, my father lived permanently on oxygen for 12 years, and this nonsense and this ongoing spin has to stop. There are real issues at hand, and those issues are perpetuated by the ever-increasing prices of your hydro rates.

The C.D. Howe report revealed that provisions of the Green Energy Act and a whopping 66 ministerial directives have overridden your long-term energy plan, and that means rising prices for consumers and more instability for business and investors and our ratepayers, as I said. Your project also is reported to generate over \$370 million per year from ratepayers so that they have to pay for your failed expensive green energy scheme. Minister, the C.D. Howe report urges you to hit the pause button now.

Will you face the music and commit today that doing the right thing is ending this scheme once and for all?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, there's only 4% or less of green energy in the grid at the present time. If there's pressure on prices, it's because, for 10 years, the

Progressive Conservative government made no investment in the energy sector. They had declining megawatts. They had declining transmission. This government had to build an energy system almost from scratch. We've created 13,000 megawatts. We've improved over 7,500 kilometres of transmission. That is rate-based; that goes on the rate base. It pushed the rates up—thanks to them.

We have taken some steps to mitigate. The clean energy benefit is reducing 10% off the electricity bills for families and small businesses.

They should take the blame for rising prices because we had to build the system from scratch.

## HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** My question is to the Premier this morning. Good morning, Premier.

When the government shut down the slots at Windsor Raceway, which led to the collapse of the local harness racing industry in Windsor and Essex counties and the loss of 2,000 jobs in my community, the justification, Premier, was that those who gambled at the track would gravitate to Caesars and do their gaming at Caesars in downtown Windsor. By now, Premier, you must have had time to crunch the numbers. Did the experiment work?

How much additional revenue has been realized at Caesars since the slots at the track were shut down and so many people—2,000 people—were left without good-paying jobs in my community?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know the member opposite is asking a question in the context of the issues around the horse racing industry and the changes that were made. I am very pleased, for example, that the Lakeshore group has been given four race dates, and I know that he will be happy about that because it's very close to his community. We've put \$180 million into the system to guarantee a transition. I am awaiting the report from the panel with a five-year strategy. We want the horse racing industry to be sustainable. It was not transparent; it was not clear how the funding was working, and we have many opportunities for input on that.

1130

We made a decision. The Drummond report put forward a suggestion. We made that decision, but we have made it clear that we want to have a sustainable horse racing industry in Ontario, and we're well on track to do that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Nice try, Premier. Thank you for those four extra dates in Leamington, by the way. The member from Essex and myself were there yesterday to show support. No one from your government or the official opposition was, but we were.

Prior to this ill-fated decision to close the slots at Windsor Raceway, the government was bringing in an estimated \$8 million in clear profit; \$8 million, Premier, is nothing to sneeze at.

There's no shame in admitting you made a mistake, Premier, no shame whatsoever. Will this government reopen the slots at Windsor Raceway to breathe new life back into the provincial harness racing industry, get those 2,000 people back to work and demonstrate to the people in this province, Premier, that when you say it, you mean it when you stand up, as you did so repeatedly this morning, and said that jobs are a priority to your government?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** That's why we want the horse racing industry to be sustainable. I'm really glad that the member opposite was at Lakeshore; it's his community. I'm glad that he was there.

But I'm also glad that it's our commitment to the horse racing industry that's allowing this transition to happen. I will be the first to say that my predecessor recognized that—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Cupping your hand as a microphone and yelling is not really what I like to see here.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Trust me, you don't even need your hands; I can hear you anyway.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'd be the first to admit that my predecessor stepped back from that initial decision and said that we have to put in place a sustainable industry, that just removing the money that was in the system—even though the system wasn't transparent, it was very fractious. There needed to be a change. We've acknowledged we need a five-year strategy that integrates, and that's what we're doing.

## NUCLEAR SAFETY

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** My question is for the Minister of Energy. We have been hearing news lately regarding nuclear safety, particularly with respect to the ongoing situation in Japan. Of course, this stems from March 2011 when a magnitude 9.0 earthquake off the coast of Japan generated a 15-metre tsunami towards the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. This tsunami caused a nuclear meltdown and the subsequent release of radioactive materials. The issue has recently resurfaced in the news with fresh leaks and concerns over the radioactivity of the region's fish, livestock and agriculture are raised.

Speaker, through you to the minister: Will you please explain the protections the government has installed to prevent such future occasions?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I thank the member for the question. He certainly is right to show some concern in the sense that he represents nuclear host communities. The health and safety of Ontarians is certainly our top priority.

In the wake of the Fukushima accident, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission established a task force to evaluate the implications of the nuclear event in Japan. The report concluded that Canadian nuclear power plants

are safe and robust and have a strong design relying on multiple layers of defence. They also confirmed that the design of our Candu reactors safeguards against any incidents arising from external events such as earthquakes.

Ontario strives for continuous improvement from lessons learned from that report, and Ontario Power Generation and Bruce Power have taken numerous measures to enhance the safety of our nuclear facilities.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** It's reassuring to know that Ontario has been taking very adequate steps towards ensuring the safety of our nuclear reactors from events like natural disasters. While Ontario is not particularly prone to earthquakes, I feel that it is important that the government prepare for all possible eventualities when dealing with critical infrastructure like nuclear plants.

I also know, from reading various news reports, that another danger concerning nuclear reactors is related to their security. While the threat to security is very low, it nevertheless raises the question of whether we are prepared for such an event or not.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell me if we have precautions in place for such an event?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Again, I compliment the member for his responsibility on this particular issue. Nuclear safety and security are top priorities for the government and Ontario's nuclear operators.

You'll be pleased to learn that the Bruce Power site received the highest possible security grade from the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission. Ontario Power Generation is aggressively pursuing a \$350-million security enhancement project. Some 95% of the enhancement program is completed, and the remaining 5% is on track for completion by the end of this year. OPG and Bruce Power continue to ensure that enhanced security arrangements and contingency plans are in place at their nuclear facilities.

Mr. Speaker, ongoing review of safety at these facilities will continue even after the current security enhancement project has been completed. I can tell you that if you speak to the senior management of both of these facilities—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

## ORDER OF BUSINESS

**Mr. Steve Clark:** My question is back to the Premier. Premier, we started question period today with two lead questions: one from my leader, Tim Hudak, and the other from my House leader, Jim Wilson. It was very clear, Premier, that there are half a million Ontarians who are out of work right now. They need us to clear the decks and put forward some legislation that's going to create jobs in this province.

My House leader is going to table a unanimous consent motion this afternoon. My question is very simple, Premier: Are you going to support it? Yes or no?



**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** We appreciate, on this side of the House, the new enthusiasm on the part of the Progressive Conservative Party, but the fact of the matter is we found ourselves in this position because for the last year or so, it has been the Progressive Conservative Party who has been dragging their feet on every single bill that's brought forward. Mr. Speaker, Bill 14, non-profit housing co-ops—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** While I might not necessarily be able to identify the individual who is using unparliamentary language, I am disappointed to hear it. I would recommend very strongly, without me absolutely knowing for sure of who to withdraw—might want to stand up and withdraw on their own.

**Interjection:** Withdraw.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Speaker, I withdraw.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I got two for the price of one. I'm happy.

Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, let me give some examples: Bill 14, non-profit housing co-ops, 15 hours and 15 minutes due to opposition filibustering; Bill 36, Local Food Act, 20 hours and 35 minutes; Bill 55, Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act, 18 hours and 39 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, it has been this party that has been filibustering for the last year. We welcome their—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** At any time, the Speaker has the prerogative to remove somebody. It doesn't mean just at the end of question period. It could be at the end of question period; it could be at the end of the day. So I would ask the two members who still seem to want to yell to cool it.

You have 10 seconds.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, we welcome their enthusiasm, but the fact of the matter is, we will have discussion amongst House leaders. I wish they had some of this impatience last—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. That was your 10.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Timmins-James Bay on a point of order.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to expand the scope of the Standing Committee on Justice Policy to allow for questions related to the motivation and intent of Liberal Party staff and former staff of the Office of the Premier with regard to the meetings with the Speaker and the prima facie case of privilege, and that this expanded scope shall not include the Speaker's confidential discussions.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I do have to do things properly, so let me at least get the one part done.

The member from Timmins-James Bay has asked for unanimous consent to put forward a motion. Do I hear unanimous consent? I heard a no.

There are no deferred votes. This House, therefore, stands recessed until 1 p.m.

*The House recessed from 1140 to 1300.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I'm pleased to welcome Terry Kingsmill, registrar of the Ontario Institute of Agrologists, to Queen's Park today. Terry is here for the Ontario Institute of Professional Agrologists Act, which I'll be introducing at the appropriate time.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I notice that my good friend Len Domino is here, along with somebody else whom I can't see far enough to introduce, but I do recognize Len.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** They might send you a note and you can get it on the go-round.

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to welcome our friends from the co-op sector back to the Legislature: Harvey Cooper and his team. Thank you so much for your continued support on the bill.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm going to help the member for Scarborough-Agincourt. I'm going to actually give all the details, because some may think they're here for Bill 14, the co-op act; I think they're here for Jim Wilson's unanimous consent motion for programming—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Just introductions, please.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Sorry; I got carried away, Speaker.

I'd like to welcome Dale Reagan, managing director; Harvey Cooper, manager of government relations; Diane Miles, manager of co-op services; Simone Swail, program manager, special initiatives; and Judy Shaw, program manager, co-op services. Let's hear it for the co-operative federation, who are here and supportive.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There are repercussions if it gets too carried away. That's all. I just wanted to let the member know.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** So do I.

The member from Oxford.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I forgot that, along with the agrologists, Len Domino is here too, and I'd like to welcome him to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I think that took care of the member from Timmins-James Bay.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### ANNIVERSARY OF ARMENIAN INDEPENDENCE

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Today, I rise in the House to join the Armenian-Canadian community to celebrate 22 years of Armenian independence.

On September 21, 1991, the people of Armenia decided to take their first step towards democracy after 70 years of Soviet rule. They voted overwhelmingly in favour of independence and freedom, giving their families and future generations the hope and possibility of a better life.

Now, from the crossroads of eastern Europe and western Asia, Armenia is pursuing its destiny among a community of nations as a multi-party democratic country.

Over the last two decades, the international community has seen Armenia make huge strides towards prosperity, thanks to the efforts of its citizens.

I stand here today with the members of this House and reflect on the immense challenges that were overcome to achieve their freedom and democracy.

Through Canada's partnership, we have helped Armenia expand their economy and build infrastructure. But here at home, the Armenian people have played a vital role in building the community, especially in my region of Waterloo.

I want to take the time to thank the Armenian National Committee of Southwestern Ontario for their investment in Ontario's economy through the businesses they successfully run, creating jobs for people here in Ontario.

I also want to thank them for sharing their culture and traditions as we grow together as a country and province.

I invite all members to join me in congratulating our Armenian-Canadian friends and our colleagues serving in the Armenian National Assembly a happy 22nd Independence Day.

#### SUZANNE BEARD

**Mr. Michael Prue:** For the last number of years, I've had the opportunity every September to stand up and talk about the Beach Citizen of the Year, and I'm going to do so again.

This year, on Saturday, we inaugurated the latest Beach Citizen of the Year in the person of Suzanne Beard. Suzanne Beard is the latest winner. The Beach Citizen of the Year is chosen by a group of people coming together from Community Centre 55, Beach Metro News and the Toronto Beaches Lions Club. They unanimously chose Suzanne Beard as this year's recipient.

Suzanne has worked tirelessly in the Beach community, most notably in the Brownies and Girl Guides, hosting and putting together a group of girls and young women. She has also worked very hard in terms of interfaith lunches and drop-ins for people who need support in our community, showing that the Beach is a caring community, and she has also been the program coordinator there. And last but not least, she has volunteered in the Beach BIA.

Congratulations to Suzanne. Her stone was placed on Saturday. A hundred people or more stood there in the rain to watch it, and we think she is most fitting for this award. We congratulate her and all of the people who

take the time during the year to help choose the winner and to show just how good a place the Beach is in which to live and to work.

#### HONG FOOK CONNECTING HEALTH NURSE PRACTITIONER-LED CLINIC

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to rise today to share some fantastic news from my riding of Scarborough-Agincourt. Last Monday I had the honour of officially opening the Hong Fook Connecting Health Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic with the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. This is yet another example of this government's commitment to bringing health care closer to home and ensuring that Ontarians are receiving the right care in the right place at the right time and from the right health care practitioner. I commend the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care for her continued dedication to strengthen health care across this province.

Mr. Speaker, this nurse-practitioner-led clinic will bring multi-faceted health care to the diverse population in my riding of Scarborough-Agincourt and will bring much-needed mental and physical health supports to the people who need it.

I'd also like to take this moment to recognize some of the community leaders who have made this clinic possible: Dr. Peter Chang, one of the founders of Hong Fook and chair of the Hong Fook Mental Health Association; Bonnie Wong, executive director, for her strong leadership; Beth Cowper-Fung, the president of the Nurse Practitioners' Association of Ontario; and Jason Park, the clinic president.

This is excellent news for the residents of my riding, who have not only been supported by this clinic but also beyond. I'd like to thank and congratulate everyone involved in opening the Hong Fook Connecting Health Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic.

#### WIND TURBINES

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Last week I had the pleasure of attending the International Plowing Match in Mitchell. While we were there, we heard yet again from Ontarians who are fed up with the heavy-handed imposition of wind turbines by this Liberal government. While reporters are around and cameras are on, this Premier, like her predecessor, says the right things but fails to deliver on promises for a greater say for rural Ontarians. The Premier asks my constituents and those across this province to take her word for it and that they are "putting changes in place," without giving any details. In my opinion, this just continues the Liberal trend to over-promise and under-deliver.

In my riding, it's too little, too late. We already have over 400 turbines in our community. The people of my riding, the great riding of Chatham-Kent-Essex, cannot figure out why we're paying for wind turbines to be shut down due to the lack of demand, yet there are still



hundreds more scheduled to be put up. Does this sound like a good business plan? I don't think so.

Our community is also currently dealing with an issue of safety regarding eight turbines that were built too close to the Chatham airport that have been ordered to come down by Transport Canada. Local pilots could have told you about the safety concerns, but this government was not listening.

Speaker, I hope that this government will start to deliver on their promises and show some respect for Chatham–Kent–Essex and rural Ontario.

#### WOMEN'S COMMUNITY HOUSE

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I rise today to pay tribute to the eight courageous and dedicated women who, 35 years ago in my community, recognized the need to provide services for abused women and their children, who had no place in London to turn to for help and safety. Women's Community House, located in my riding of London West, is now Canada's largest high-security shelter for abused women and their children.

The eight visionaries who had the courage to make change in 1978 are Barbara Beach, Amicia Gooding, Joy Green, Susan MacPhail, Elaine Robertson, Eleanor Schnall, Audrey Sutton and Judy Thompson. They dreamed of a place where abused women would find not only safety but also a home offering genuine caring and support, free from judgment or criticism. We are truly indebted to them for their courage and determination.

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We know that economic downturn and high rates of unemployment, such as we are facing in my riding of London West, create stress on families and increase demand for services like those provided by Women's Community House. Moreover, a recent federal study estimates that woman abuse costs Canada about \$7 billion each year. In these challenging times, it is more important than ever that front-line services and anti-violence efforts, such as those provided by Women's Community House, are not only maintained but also strengthened.

#### ROUGE VALLEY HEALTH SYSTEM

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** I'm delighted to report on our hospital in west Durham, as it continues to provide more service to the growing communities of Ajax and Pickering on the Scarborough border.

Thanks to this government's support, community donations and five years of balanced budgets, and the reinvestment at Rouge Valley, Ajax and Pickering campus, we have seen additional programs as people continue to move to this wonderful, family-focused area.

The hospital opened a new special clinic that helps patients get into better shape before surgery. This unique approach, called prehabilitation, reduces the need for post-operation rehabilitation, because patients go directly into surgery in stronger condition in the first place.

Our cardiac program recently returned a teenaged Whitby student to the active life all teenagers should be able to enjoy. A unique transeptal procedure cured her of her rapid heartbeat, which had for years threatened her life when she played sports, such as tennis, or even when she just climbed stairs. Today, she lives the active life of a young person, thanks to the cardiologists and staff of our hospital.

People living with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, a chronic disease that limits airflow to and from the lungs, now have a new education program at the hospital that allows them to control their condition.

I just wanted to pass on some good news, and I'll be back to pass on more from Ajax-Pickering hospital.

#### BEAR CONTROL

**Mr. Bill Walker:** My constituents and I are deeply concerned that the Ministry of Natural Resources has stopped managing nuisance bears in rural Ontario. In my riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, bears are not just a nuisance; they're a danger to the safety of residents, visitors and especially children.

This government, last year, ended the province's long-time bear management program at the MNR and put the Ontario Provincial Police in charge of bear calls. The province, however, still runs the so-called Bear Wise program, which consists of a hotline number and website that tells residents how to prevent conflict with bears.

This hotline is merely an answering machine, and gives little consolation to residents in the Grey and Bruce region, where we've had a rash of bear sightings this year. After all, we're not talking about nuisance wildlife like raccoons, skunks, wild turkeys, foxes and coyotes. We're talking about black bears. We're talking about potentially predatory animals that have actually attempted to enter homes in my riding.

The province has a duty to get back to monitoring and managing these predatory animals, as opposed to letting residents fend for themselves. The current practice virtually encourages residents and visitors to fend for themselves and then makes them out to be criminals for unlawful hunting should they discharge a firearm to protect their loved ones.

It's most necessary for the MNR to ensure that these wild animals are monitored and managed and to do all in its power to reduce the risk of harm to residents. So while my residents are doing their part and removing any potential food sources, such as bird feeders and garbage, the Minister of Natural Resources should be doing his part in reinstating the trap and relocate bear program instead of downloading it to the police, who are not trained in wildlife management.

#### SPORTS AND RECREATION FUNDING

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** I rise today to speak on the funding announcement that Minister Chan made in Scarborough Southwest on July 12, 2013, about the \$7.15

million that the Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund is providing to over 130 projects across the province of Ontario.

This fund is a cost-sharing program designed to provide non-capital, project-based seed funding to organizations for the successful delivery of integrated sport, recreation and physical activity projects.

As part of our government's \$7.15-million Sport and Recreation Communities Fund, the West Scarborough Neighbourhood Community Centre, in my riding of Scarborough Southwest, received \$67,000 for their On the Move aquatics program. This program provides opportunities for hundreds of low-income children, both in and out of school hours, to learn the basics and importance of aquatics. This program allows 480 children to learn the fundamentals of aquatics during school hours, enhancing and diversifying physical education, as well as teaching important life skills.

A program such as On the Move is a perfect example of how our government has made early childhood education a priority. By creating a healthier and more active student body, Ontario schools have the ability to be innovative and competitive.

This community centre in Scarborough Southwest has a very long history of health, education, growth and community participation. Please join me in both acknowledging the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport for their generous contribution and in celebrating the hard work and future success of the West Scarborough Neighbourhood Community Centre.

#### NORTH GRENVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**Mr. Steve Clark:** It's a pleasure to rise in recognition of this weekend's North Grenville Chamber of Commerce Salute to Excellence Awards Gala. The awards night is an annual highlight in the community, an opportunity to honour outstanding businesses and citizens for their tireless efforts to make the North Grenville area a great place to work and raise a family.

There's a special reason to celebrate this year, Speaker. Saturday's gala marks the silver anniversary of the awards ceremony. I'm looking forward to being able to personally congratulate recipients of the Mel Johnston Established Business of the Year, the Dr. George and Norma Fisher Citizen of the Year, and the Russ Mosher Volunteer of the Year awards, among many, many other awards.

While the spotlight rightly shines on those award recipients, on the 25th anniversary it's also important to pay special tribute to the chamber. Led by the hard-working executive director and CEO Wendy Chapman and a very dedicated board of volunteers under the direction of chairman Mark Thornton, the North Grenville Chamber of Commerce is more than the voice of business. Supporting business remains its primary responsibility, of course, and one it performs admirably, but in a rapidly growing place like North Grenville that welcomes

so many new businesses and residents every year, the events and activities that the chamber organizes help make newcomers feel like part of the community.

So as we celebrate their remarkable 25 years, I commend the chamber for being such a big part of the North Grenville success story in the past and leading the way towards an even brighter future.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### ONTARIO INSTITUTE OF PROFESSIONAL AGROLOGISTS ACT, 2013

Mr. Hardeman moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr15, An Act respecting the Ontario Institute of Professional Agrologists.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to standing order 86, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

It is now time for motions.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to move a motion to expedite legislation in this House without notice.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Simcoe–Grey has introduced a motion—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** No.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Let me finish my sentence and then—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Oh, I definitely would listen, thank you.

The member for Simcoe–Grey has introduced a motion seeking unanimous consent. Do we agree? I heard a no.

#### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

##### FOREST INDUSTRY

**Hon. David Orazietti:** I rise in the Legislature today to acknowledge that the week of September 22 to 28, 2013, is National Forest Week.

We live in a province whose landscape is dominated by forests. Ontario has over 71 million hectares of forest with about 85 billion trees. Forests provide a range of economic, social and ecological benefits that support Ontario's high standard of living. Many Ontario communities depend on forests for jobs, recreation and a range of other benefits.

I'd like to first of all commend the men and women who work in the forestry sector for the important work



that they do and for the tremendous contribution that they make to the provincial economy. The forest sector supports more than 150,000 direct and indirect jobs in over 260 communities in northern and southern Ontario.

National Forest Week invites Canadians to learn more about the country's forest heritage and seeks to raise awareness of this valuable renewable resource.

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Originally known as Forest Fire Prevention Week in the 1920s and renamed National Forest Week in 1967, the theme of this year's event is "The Greenest Workforce." Ontario's forest professionals and practitioners do tremendous work in ensuring that the province's forests are managed sustainably. I would point out that the province's sustainable forest management practices are, in fact, recognized internationally.

As part of our effort to ensure our forests' sustainability, Ontario is advancing on a number of fronts. Ontario is supporting economic development in the forest sector by striving to ensure that the maximum value is derived from the province's forest resources. We do this through a range of measures, including conservation, innovation, expanding markets for forest-based products and achieving global recognition, both of Ontario's wood products and of its ecologically sustainable forest management practices.

The forestry industry has been through some particularly challenging economic times. Despite these challenges, I am optimistic that the outlook for Ontario's forestry sector is positive and that we will continue to see improvements in the coming years. There are a number of recent examples of companies that have emerged from financial restructuring and others that are investing in Ontario.

For example, Aditya Birla has acquired the Terrace Bay pulp industry and will spend over \$250 million to convert the facility to produce dissolving pulp. This is expected to support about 1,900 direct and indirect jobs.

Just last week, Olav Haavalsdrud Timber Company in Hornepayne celebrated the completion of a \$66-million cogeneration facility adjacent to its sawmill. The facility will use biomass waste to produce electricity for sale to the grid this October. I was pleased to announce that Ontario's support for this project has included a conditional grant of \$11.8 million through the Forest Sector Prosperity Fund and \$17.8 million in a loan guarantee through the Forest Sector Loan Guarantee Program, as well as \$1 million from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corp. That's through the support of my colleague who's here, Minister Michael Gravelle. Our government's investment will help to create 20 new jobs and support 100 more at a nearby mill, as well as an estimated 40 indirect jobs in collecting forest biofibre.

As well, the installation of a steam turbine at Resolute Forest Products' Thunder Bay pulp and paper mill has also been completed. This \$65-million investment is reducing costs at the mill through the production of green energy and was supported by a \$9.6-million forest sector prosperity grant. In addition, Resolute has announced it

will invest \$50 million to build a new sawmill in Atikokan, and certainly I'm aware of the lobbying efforts of the member from Thunder Bay—Atikokan on this issue. When fully operational, it is expected to employ 90 people.

Eacom is investing \$25 million in rebuilding and expanding its Timmins sawmill after it was damaged by a fire in 2012. The company expects to bring back all of the employees displaced by the shutdown when the reopening of the facility is scheduled for this fall. The facility is expected to once again employ about 120 people.

We expect to hear more of such investments as the US economy continues to recover and lumber prices continue to rise. Our government has worked tirelessly to restore the competitiveness of the forestry sector and will continue to do so.

We're also involved in developing the greenest workforce by promoting career opportunities in forestry. Forestry is part of the popular Specialist High Skills Major program taught in our high schools. The program is designed to address research showing that the forestry industry is being affected by increasing retirements, skill shortages and other related issues. My ministry is undertaking initiatives that promote forestry and wood manufacturing career opportunities and wood-based products to teachers.

But that is not all we are doing to look into the future with respect to this important industry. We are also doing our best to promote the use of Ontario's forest products through our Ontario Wood brand. We launched the Ontario Wood brand in 2011 to promote Ontario wood domestically, along with our industry partners. An initiative of the Ontario government, Ontario Wood promotes the benefit of buying Ontario wood and raising awareness of the sustainability of our province's forestry industry. Managing our forests sustainably according to our rigorous forest management planning process means achieving the appropriate balance between environmental, economic and society's needs and expectations, both now and for the future. This initiative also showcases the diversity and variety of Ontario wood products.

Ontario wood is local. A product cannot be licensed unless at least 75% of the wood used is from trees that are harvested from sustainably managed forests in Ontario. In addition, all processing associated with the manufacturing of the products must take place in facilities located in the province.

The message that we are trying to get out is that Ontarians should feel good about using Ontario wood. To help make that possible, we are making it easy for consumers to identify and buy Ontario wood products. When Ontario consumers look for the distinctive leaf logo that is part of the Ontario Wood brand, they can rest assured that they are supporting jobs in the province, reducing the environmental impact and using a versatile renewable resource. We are offering the Ontario Wood brand to those who make the tremendous variety of wood products that come from Ontario—everyone from the largest sawmiller to the individual artisan.

Since its launch, we have been busy licensing manufacturers and supporting organizations to use the brand. Members may also be interested to know that the Ontario Forest Industries Association was the very first participant. So the industry, and communities that depend on the industry, are on board with this very important buy-Ontario initiative. We now have 65 licensees, and that number continues to grow.

I'm not telling members anything that they don't already know when I say that wood is renewable, reusable and recyclable, and it's important to note that Ontario's forestry sector is looking into the future. It's embracing the emerging bio-economy and green technologies. In fact, the province's forests have become the source for cutting-edge products and services like engineered wood for buildings, smart paper, bio-plastics and new green energy solutions. All of these products and services are experiencing increased global demand.

What can we do individually to mark National Forest Week? Get to know your local forest; plant a tree and take care of it; find out about the tree species that are native to Ontario; use Ontario wood for your next home renovation project; reflect on all the things in your home that are made from wood; and learn about preventing forest fires. There is much more we can do to develop a greater appreciation for all that forests mean to Ontario and its people. I urge all members to take some time this week to reflect on the vital importance of Ontario forests.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is now time for responses.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I'm pleased to rise today on behalf of my leader, Tim Hudak, and the PC caucus to mark National Forest Week. This week is a time to recognize and celebrate Ontario's majestic and extensive network of forests. It's also an opportunity to increase awareness about the importance of this natural resource and to learn more about how it's managed and protected.

Ontario's forests have played an integral role in the history, culture, economic and recreational life of Ontarians since the very beginning of our province. Two thirds of Ontario, or 71 million hectares, is covered by forests, the largest single component of our province's geographic and ecological landscape. Unless you've had an opportunity to fly over our north, you can't fully appreciate the scope and magnitude of our forests.

Ontario's abundance of forests provides many ecological benefits, including serving as habitat for countless species, storing carbon, improving our water and air quality, and preventing soil erosion.

Each year, hundreds of thousands of Ontarians and foreign visitors enjoy spending leisure time in our forests, participating in recreational activities such as fishing, hunting, camping, skiing, snowmobiling, and all the other recreational vehicles that go through there.

The theme of this year's National Forest Week is "The Greenest Workforce," which highlights the vital work done by forestry professionals in managing our forest resources. Forestry professionals are employed in logging, pulp and paper, forest outreach and education,

forest sciences, and many other exciting and rewarding sectors. Many of our colleges and universities dedicate significant resources to preparing the next generation of foresters.

Although the forest industry provides Ontarians with 150,000 direct and indirect jobs—it used to be over 200,000—across 260 communities and is still an important part of our province's economy, almost 44% of the direct forestry jobs in Ontario were lost between 2004 and 2011. Some of this decline can certainly be attributed to market conditions, particularly the collapse of the US housing market in 2008.

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However, an indisputable and significant contributing factor has been many of the misguided policies of the McGuinty-Wynne government. Over the last 10 years, dozens of logging operations and pulp and paper mills have been closed, resulting in the loss of thousands of jobs in northern Ontario. As I indicated, the downsizing can be partially attributed to market conditions, but you cannot overlook the failed green energy policies of the McGuinty-Wynne government. They've driven up energy costs to unsustainable levels, forcing many mill operations to relocate to Quebec or other jurisdictions, taking those jobs with them.

Continuing uncertainty and instability pertaining to forest tenure and the ongoing unbalanced administration of the species-at-risk regulations have made a bad situation even worse. The aggressive expansion of protection for a wide variety of species has not reflected science or the realities on the ground.

You only have to look at the recent MNR proposals regarding caribou conservation to see how social and economic factors are not even being considered when proposals of this nature are being put together. The proposals regarding caribou include recovery efforts to restore historic caribou herds in parts of the north where caribou have not been seen since the 1890s. The impact of these proposals on the Abitibi River forest alone would result in sacrificing half of the entire forest volume, which would have devastating results on communities from North Bay to Hearst. Under this government, northerners themselves are starting to feel like endangered species.

So many decisions by MNR in recent years have not been based on science but rather a continuing desire to satisfy the singular demands of many special-interest groups that have supported this government over the years.

We launched our recent white paper in Thunder Bay last week: A Champion for Northern Jobs and Resources. We laid out a number of proposals which would result in a much faster recovery for the forestry industry.

We would reform the forest tenure system to ensure long-term stability and encourage much-needed investment. We'd guarantee a harvest allocation of at least 26 million cubic metres a year, which is nearly twice the actual current harvest level.



We'd amend species-at-risk legislation to ensure that social and economic impacts are duly analyzed and considered.

Despite the obstacles and roadblocks imposed by this government, the forestry companies that remain want to continue to ensure they have this valuable renewable resource and that it's harvested sustainably so we can have it for future generations. They maintain the health of our forests and combat the spread of invasive disease.

There's no question that our forest industry has faced challenges over the past decade under Liberal rule, yet there is great potential in Ontario for our forestry industry to once again be number one in North America.

Market conditions are poised for a major recovery. They need government policies that keep pace and do not restrict investment and certainty. We want a prosperous forestry industry. We need renewed regulations imposed.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I rise in the Legislature today on behalf of my New Democratic colleagues and our leader, Andrea Horwath, to acknowledge National Forest Week. Coming from northern Ontario, like many of my colleagues do, we still know what thousands of miles and acres of forest look like. I believe the minister said there were over 85 billion trees. I don't know how he counted that, but we'll go with him.

Forests provide recreation—yes, they provide a lot of recreation—but they provide a lot of jobs. Forestry was one of the first industries in our province, and it continues to be the cornerstone of many parts of our province.

The value of the forest sector to the provincial economy was \$11.9 billion in 2011, creating 150,000 direct and indirect jobs, most of them in rural and northern Ontario—an industry well worth celebrating, and deserving of recognition and discussion, since it's still widely misunderstood.

Forestry is a totally renewable resource. It has a lot in common with agriculture. The main difference is, the growing cycle is much longer. A farmer plants and harvests a crop on an annual basis, while a forester's harvest cycle could be 50 years or longer.

There is still a widely held misconception that trees are clear-cut without any planning for the future, which is false. It's simply not in the interest of those who make their living from the forest to cut more than can be regenerated, because they would be jeopardizing their long-term future.

It's not in the best interest of the people who work in the forest to jeopardize species, because they live and breathe these species every day. It's simply not in their best interest.

It's also not in the government's interest since 80% of our forest resource, or 57 million acres—or hectares; that's a lot more—is on crown land. The government of Ontario oversees the management of crown forest, including commercial logging on over 27 million hectares.

The fact that the forest sector still created 150,000 jobs in Ontario in 2011 is truly amazing, considering the challenges it has faced within the last decade. In 2002-03, the

harvest of fibre from crown forest was 24 million cubic metres. The demand dropped to 10.5 million cubic metres in 2009-10—a drop of more than half. This led to shock waves throughout the province. The list of closed mills, lost jobs and shattered dreams throughout the north is long. This shock, created in large part by the collapse of the housing market and the drop in demand for newsprint, was amplified by the actions of the Liberal government. At a time when global competition was fierce, Ontario mills were faced with rapidly increasing hydro rates. This led to processing moving to other provinces where rates are now half what they are in Ontario, more lost jobs and more raw fibre being exported out of the province.

The government responded with temporary rebate programs which do not provide the stability needed for long-term investment. At the same time, the government moved to change the forest tenure system, creating more confusion for a sector trying to come to grips with a rapidly changing world. The new tenure system has led to many problems for communities. Even as the sector begins to bounce back, these problems remain. The forest resource is tied to the company, not to the community, so the fibre can be trucked away, leaving the community to wither.

Now the sector is starting to rebound and some mills are starting back up, and what some mills are experiencing—they've put the plan together to fire up, like True North plywood in Cochrane, and they can't access the fibre. So the tenure system is not working.

Another problem that has to be addressed is that some municipalities are facing MPAC reassessments and ARB decisions based on a change in value of the mills that basically could bankrupt municipalities like Elk Lake. The government has struck a committee to look at this. We have to do more than look at it. These communities were the ones who tried to help during the crisis, and now they're being buffeted by the long-term effects of this.

These are some of the things that, during National Forest Week, we should actually—more than just appreciate trees; we should look at how we in this Legislature can fix problems that exist in this industry today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is now time for petitions. I'll go to somebody I'd like to hear from a lot: Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, please.

## PETITIONS

### ALGONQUIN LAND CLAIM

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition signed by hundreds of property owners and residents in and around Aylen Lake. It is also supported by a resolution of the township of South Algonquin. I apologize to my colleagues, but this is going to take a bit of time. But I have assured these people that

I will read the petition in full, as I only have one opportunity to do so.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the province of Ontario/MNR has ceded 117,500 acres of crown lands in the draft Algonquin treaty without any consultation with its citizens as to 'crown land planning and decision-making' nor did it engage in a process 'that must be open and understandable by all' both of which are requirements of the MNR's publicly stated principles;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas the Algonquins of Ontario (AOO) have recently concluded a draft treaty with the government of Canada and the government of Ontario;

"Whereas the land claim portion of the draft treaty includes 117,500 acres of crown lands for Algonquin ownership;

"Whereas less than 4% of all Ontario crown lands in the claim areas has been awarded to the AOO;

"Whereas the geographic area known as the riding of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke contains 80% of those crown lands ceded to the AOO yet only four (4) Algonquin communities of the ten (10) Algonquin communities reside in the Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke riding area, leaving six (6) Algonquin communities to share a disproportionate 20% of those crown lands in the claim area;

"Whereas the Aylen Lake community consists of 260 property owners representing only approximately 500 acres of private lands around Aylen Lake;

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"Whereas the draft treaty cedes 1,800 acres of crown lands to the AOO in and around Aylen Lake;

"Whereas lakefront crown land sales were ended in 1972 by the government of the day stating that many lakes were sensitive to growth and environmental concerns also prompted that decision to cease the sale of such lands;

"Whereas Aylen Lake and Balfour Lake have been identified as scarce and sensitive 'trout lakes' in a publication by the province of Ontario in May 2006 entitled 'Inland Ontario Lakes Designated for Lake Trout Management,' and Aylen Lake and Balfour Lake are included in 1% of all lakes in Ontario being protected 'by the province';

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources official "Basic Principles that Guide MNR in Managing Crown Lands" states as one of its principles: 'The public, interest groups and stakeholders must be actively involved in crown land use planning and decision-making,' and further, 'All clients must be treated fairly; principles and processes behind land management decisions must be open and understandable to all';

"Whereas the MNR defines clients as '... from private citizens and interest groups to corporations and other ...';

"Whereas citizens of Ontario in the land claim area should have been consulted and had some of their concerns reflected in the granting of specific parcels of

crown lands in the land claim area by the province of Ontario;

"Whereas the province of Ontario/MNR has granted 117,500 acres of crown lands to the AOO in their draft treaty in clear violation of their own publicized fundamental principles as there has not been any involvement whatsoever with 'the public, interest groups, and stakeholders' in the decision-making which granted crown lands to the AOO and the distribution of where these ceded crown lands are located;

"Whereas the undersigned recognize the need for an Algonquin treaty but take exception to the province of Ontario/MNR's failure to follow its own principles and policies for the involvement of its clients in the province/MNR's actions;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, hereby request that the province of Ontario/Ministry of Natural Resources engage in meaningful dialogue with its citizens/clients affected by the allocation of crown lands as mandated and directed in the MNR's stated principles referred to hereinbefore with a view to altering or relocating some of the ceded crown lands by the province of Ontario while maintaining the quantum acreage of 117,500 acres of crown lands granted in the draft Algonquin treaty;

"Whereas the province of Ontario/MNR has ceded 117,500 acres of crown lands in the draft Algonquin treaty without any consultation with its citizens as to 'crown land planning and decision-making' nor did it engage in a process 'that must be open and understandable by all' both of which are requirements of the MNR's publicly stated principles;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Therefore we, the undersigned, hereby request that the province of Ontario/Ministry of Natural Resources engage in meaningful dialogue with its citizens/clients affected by the allocation of crown lands as mandated and directed in the MNR's stated principles referred to hereinbefore with a view to altering or relocating some of the ceded crown lands by the province of Ontario while maintaining the quantum acreage of 117,500 acres of crown lands granted in the draft Algonquin treaty."

I hereby affix my name and pass it down with Katherine.

#### ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Mine won't be quite so voluminous.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's tradespeople are subject to stifling regulation and are compelled to pay membership fees to the unaccountable College of Trades; and

"Whereas these fees are a tax grab that drives down the wages of skilled tradespeople; and

"Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encouraging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and



"Whereas the current policies of the McGuinty/Wynne Liberal government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately disband the College of Trades, cease imposing needless membership fees and enact policies to attract young Ontarians into skilled trade careers."

I support this petition and will send it with page James.

#### FISHING AND HUNTING REGULATIONS

**Mr. John O'Toole:** A petition from my riding of Durham reads as follows:

"Whereas the McGuinty/Wynne government has drastically reduced the number of Ontario hunting and fishing regulation booklets available to the public; and

"Whereas regulations in printed booklets are the most portable and convenient format for outdoorspersons to consult in the field, while hunting or fishing; and

"Whereas in addition to the Internet being unavailable in many remote areas, many Ontarians do not have Internet access, or prefer information in print rather than electronic format; and

"Whereas those who hunt and fish pay substantial amounts each year to purchase outdoor cards, hunting licences and fishing licences and it is reasonable to expect that a booklet explaining the guidelines "should be provided as a courtesy; and

"Whereas Ontario hunters and anglers need to access the most current regulations to ensure they enjoy hunting and fishing safely and lawfully;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, ask the Ministry of Natural Resources to respect the wishes of Ontario anglers and hunters by providing hunting and fishing regulations in a booklet format to everyone who needs one," when and where they need it.

I'm pleased to support this on behalf of Guy Foley and Roger Kay, both constituents of mine who are outdoors people.

#### HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Green Energy Act has driven up the cost of electricity in Ontario due to unrealistic subsidies for certain energy sources, including the world's highest subsidies for solar power; and

"Whereas this cost is passed on to ratepayers through the global adjustment, which can account for almost half of a ratepayer's hydro bill; and

"Whereas the high cost of energy is severely impacting the quality of life of Ontario's residents, especially fixed-income seniors; and

"Whereas it is imperative to remedy Liberal mismanagement in the energy sector by implementing im-

mediate reforms detailed in the Ontario PC white paper *Paths to Prosperity—Affordable Energy*;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately repeal the Green Energy Act, 2009, and all other statutes that artificially inflate the cost of electricity with the aim of bringing down electricity rates and abolishing expensive surcharges such as the global adjustment and debt retirement charges."

I agree with this and will be passing it off to page Peyton.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Petitions? The member for Durham.

#### JURY DUTY

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Thank you, Speaker. I'm surprised that the whip didn't do it—or the Minister of Agriculture, rather.

"Whereas completing jury duty presents many challenges to seniors (travel, health, financial);

"Where service as a juror may cause significant harm for those dependent on the individual selected for jury duty;

"Whereas the provinces of Alberta, British Columbia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Quebec and Saskatchewan as well as the Yukon territory all provide opportunities for jury duty exemption"—

#### *Interjections.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'm having difficulty hearing—for persons over the age of 65;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, ask that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario allow individuals over the age of 65; those in sole care of children under the age of seven that are not in full-day school; or those in sole care of individuals with health or mental health illness requiring constant care the option of being exempt from jury duty with the option for individuals with permanent health conditions to be exempted permanently from being a juror" or the ability to opt out completely based on age.

I'm pleased to sign and support this on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Durham and present it to page Kyle.

#### MARKDALE HOSPITAL

**Mr. Bill Walker:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Grey Bruce Health Services' Markdale hospital is the only health care facility between Owen Sound and Orangeville on the Highway 10 corridor;

"Whereas the community of Markdale rallied to raise \$13 million on the promise they would get a new state-of-the-art hospital in Markdale;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care announce as soon as possible its intended construction date for the new Markdale hospital and ensure that the

care needs of the patients and families of our community are met in a timely manner.”

I highly support this and will pass it off to page James and send it to the Clerks’ table.

### HYDRO RATES

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for—help me.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I didn’t know if you were looking past me. This will be shorter, Speaker: a petition on the global adjustment charge on hydro bills.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Auditor General of Ontario defines the global adjustment charge on hydro bills as ‘mostly consisting of the difference between the market price and the price paid to generators as set by the board for OPG or under contract with the government or the OPA’; and

“Whereas the Auditor General says the global adjustment has been rising steadily over the last few years and is expected to continue to rise from \$700 million (prior to the 2009 passage of the Green Energy Act) to \$8.1 billion by 2014; and

“Whereas the Liberal government’s 2010 fall economic statement stated that hydro bills are expected to rise 46% by 2015, and that new renewable power generation would account for 56% of that increase; and

“Whereas small to mid-sized businesses across Ontario are seeing the global adjustment portion of their monthly hydro bills increase significantly to the point that it is now larger than the actual energy portion of their bills; and

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“Whereas many of those businesses are now delaying investment or hiring, or both, and considering either closing or moving outside of the province of Ontario as a result of delivered-to-market industrial energy rates that are now the highest in North America;

“We, the undersigned, do hereby petition the government of Ontario to reverse course on its expensive energy policy by cancelling the feed-in tariff (FIT) subsidies and treating Ontario’s energy as an economic development tool so that it once again is a competitive advantage for Ontario in retaining and attracting jobs and investment.”

I affix my name and send it down with Jasper.

### PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKERS

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas current community care access centre personal support worker guidelines do not provide a clear indication of whether PSWs are allowed to support patients’ activities outside the home; and

“Whereas patient health is best ensured through an active, healthy lifestyle that may involve activities outside the patient’s home; and

“Whereas the spirit of community care includes patient access to their community’s healthy lifestyle resources;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To enact all necessary statutes that would allow personal support workers and other community care access centre staff to support their patients and clients both in the home and in necessary activities in their communities.”

I will be passing this off to the page. Thank you.

### HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I’m honoured to rise to present a petition.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the horse racing industry employs approximately 60,000 people, creates \$1.5 billion in wages and \$2 billion in recurring expenditures annually; and

“Whereas the partnership that was created between government and the horse breeding and racing industry has been a model arrangement and is heralded throughout North America, with 75% of revenues going to the provincial government to fund important programs like health care and education, 5% to the municipalities and only 20% goes back to the horse business; and

“Whereas the horse business is a significant source of revenue for the farming community and rural municipalities;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Ministry of Finance continue the revenue-sharing partnership with the horse racing industry for the benefit of Ontario’s agricultural and rural economies.”

I support this and will send it with page Ravicha.

### ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Bill Walker:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s tradespeople are subject to stifling regulation and are compelled to pay membership fees to the unaccountable College of Trades; and

“Whereas these fees are a tax grab that drives down the wages of skilled tradespeople; and

“Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encouraging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and

“Whereas the current policies of the McGuinty/Wynne Liberal government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:



"To immediately disband the College of Trades, cease imposing needless membership fees and enact policies to attract young Ontarians into skilled trade careers."

I support it and will send it to the Clerks' table with Ravicha.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Unfortunately, that concludes the time we have available for petitions this afternoon.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### NON-PROFIT HOUSING CO-OPERATIVES STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2013

### LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LES COOPÉRATIVES DE LOGEMENT SANS BUT LUCRATIF

Mr. Naqvi, on behalf of Mrs. Jeffrey, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 14, An Act to amend the Co-operative Corporations Act and the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of non-profit housing co-operatives and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / *Projet de loi 14, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les sociétés coopératives et la Loi de 2006 sur la location à usage d'habitation en ce qui concerne les coopératives de logement sans but lucratif et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate? I recognize the Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you very much, Speaker, for recognizing me and giving me the opportunity to speak on this very important bill. I will be sharing my time with the member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan, the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, on this bill.

I rise in the House today to begin third reading debate on Bill 14, a bill to amend the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006, and the Co-operative Corporations Act. I'm pleased to speak on the third reading of legislation that, if passed, would help support affordable housing for Ontarians by bringing increased fairness, cost effectiveness and accessibility to Ontario's co-operative housing sector.

To begin, I would like to express my gratitude to the committee for its expediency in reviewing this bill. Speaker, it's excellent to see how fast this bill has progressed. In fact, this bill was not amended at committee, and I thank all parties for their support in pushing forward this very important bill.

This legislation is the result of a process that started almost a decade ago. Since 2004, extensive consultation has been conducted among the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of the Attorney General and key housing sector

stakeholders on changes to legislation requested by co-op housing providers. I'm pleased to say that these stakeholders have expressed their support for the proposed changes, and the consultations have resulted in the action our government is taking to support co-operative housing in Ontario.

In particular, Speaker, I would like to thank the Co-operative Housing Federation for its support. I'm really happy to note that there are some representatives from the organization who are present, who have come again and again and again to the many hours of debate that have taken place in this House, and who have advocated for this particular bill for some time. I want to recognize the presence of Dale Reagan; Diane Miles; Simone Swail; Judy Shaw; and my very good friend and friend, I believe, of every single person in this Legislature, Mr. Harvey Cooper. Thank you very much. Harvey in particular has been an amazing force in making us recognize these changes and how important these changes are.

I also, on a personal level and on a local level, want to thank CHASEO, the Co-operative Housing Association of Eastern Ontario, which is based out of my riding of Ottawa Centre, for their advocacy for this bill, for the great job they do in serving co-operatives in my community in Ottawa and eastern Ontario writ large, and for making sure that we have more co-operative housing in our community and that those who live in co-operative housing are well looked after. So I want to thank them as well.

The federation has done outstanding work in representing the multiple co-op members and co-op boards across Ontario. The federation is committed to co-operative housing as an essential component of Canada's overall housing sector, and to maintaining and promoting a strong co-operative housing sector here in Ontario, a position shared by our government.

The federation and its 510 member housing co-ops across the province have long advocated for changes to the legislation governing the existing co-op tenure dispute resolution process. This is a process that has been characterized as complex, costly and time-consuming. Ontario's non-profit co-operating housing providers need to have access to a process that allows for the termination of occupancy agreements in a way that is efficient and cost-effective. Our government has committed to making this happen and to making the co-op tenure dispute resolution process more transparent, accessible and fair for both residents and co-ops.

The federation has been very supportive of the amendments proposed in this resulting bill and has been instrumental in ensuring that it meets the needs of the co-operative housing community. The federation has also gone on the record to call our proposed legislation good public policy.

We also want to streamline the internal decision-making process of co-ops. The proposed changes to the Co-operative Corporations Act would make it clear that decisions made by a co-op's board could be appealed to

the co-op membership. However, this would apply only if appeals are permitted by the co-op's bylaws.

Finally, our proposed legislation would also permit the Landlord and Tenant Board to waive or defer fees for low-income individuals. This proposed power to waive fees would not only be limited to applications related to co-op tenure disputes, but it would also apply to all fees the Landlord and Tenant Board charges for landlord and tenant matters.

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Non-profit co-ops have played a vital role in Ontario's affordable housing system since the 1970s. In Ontario, there are approximately 550 not-for-profit housing co-ops, with 44,000 households, providing housing to approximately 125,000 people.

Co-ops are located in large cities and smaller communities. They support the principle of mixed-income communities. They form the basis of communities in which children have the opportunity to grow up in a healthy neighbourhood, surrounded by people of various backgrounds, abilities and occupations. These are communities where all citizens can be proud to live. Co-ops provide homes that serve as a foundation to build a better life for members, their families and their neighbours. That is one important reason why our government supports the co-op housing sector.

Our government wants to help make sure that all Ontarians have access to affordable housing. We know that a strong housing sector includes a healthy co-op sector. Our government recognizes the role that housing plays in supporting the growth and health of communities across Ontario. This is why we developed the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy. It is the first of its kind in Ontario, and we have made significant progress on our housing agenda. Our Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy sets a strong foundation for a more efficient, accessible system for those who need safe, affordable housing.

During our consultations on the strategy, we heard that the existing housing system was too complicated and created obstacles for those in need. The people delivering the housing programs told us that the system was a barrier to administering the best possible services to those in need.

Our strategy transformed the affordable housing system in Ontario. Our strategy focused on four key pillars: putting people first, creating strong partnerships, supporting affordable options, and accountability.

The Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy provides municipalities and housing providers with greater flexibility to deliver housing services, recognizing that communities have different housing needs. The increased flexibility helps ensure that resources are allocated to meet local needs and improve outcomes for people. It also helps make sure services are accountable and on the right track.

Affordable housing provides many benefits to families, but our economy benefits as well. People with secure housing are better prepared to enter the workforce.

Affordable housing projects create thousands of jobs, mostly in the local community. That's why, in the midst of fiscal constraints, we continue to invest in affordable housing.

Since 2003, Speaker, the Ontario government has committed almost \$3 billion for affordable housing. Ontario is supporting the creation of over 17,000 affordable rental housing units, making more than 263,000 repairs and improvements to existing units. We have now committed more than \$295 million for this program and are already seeing results on the ground. During 2012, more than 600 households were no longer in need of affordable housing, and more than 130 other households across the province received rent supplements to help them stay in their homes. These are important steps we have taken to support affordable housing in Ontario.

Speaker, our government now wants to take another step to help families. Bill 14, if passed, would make some long-needed changes to the Residential Tenancies Act and the Co-operative Corporations Act, based on the principles of efficiency, cost-effectiveness and fairness.

Currently, the dispute resolution process for co-op housing is governed by the Co-operative Corporations Act. Under this act, co-ops must go through a lengthy process in the courts to resolve co-op tenure disputes. The primary focus of our proposed legislation is to move most co-op tenure disputes from the more costly courts to the Landlord and Tenant Board.

However, we recognize that many of the bylaws governing co-ops are unique to this type of housing model. The Co-operative Corporations Act provides a solid framework for housing co-ops to create their bylaws, so it would continue to govern evictions that are based on grounds not provided for under the Residential Tenancies Act. Because co-op bylaws are not recognized as grounds for a Landlord and Tenant Board application under the Residential Tenancies Act, they would not be affected by this bill.

The scope of this bill would also include Residential Tenancies Act violations, such as rent arrears, illegal behaviour or wilful damage to rental property. In those cases, co-op providers will apply for a hearing at the Landlord and Tenant Board.

The amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act and the Co-operative Corporations Act would also clarify how co-op tenure disputes are judged when they proceed through either the courts or the Landlord and Tenant Board. Cases would be judged not solely on whether the proper process was followed, but on the merits of the case. Previously, the courts would assess whether or not a co-op's internal dispute resolution process was followed in making their determination. This amendment would clarify that an eviction would not be overturned due to a minor procedural irregularity made by the co-op board.

As I have stated, the intention of these amendments is to make the co-op tenure resolution process more efficient, cost-effective, accessible and transparent for all parties involved. The Landlord and Tenant Board is equipped to resolve rental unit eviction disputes more



quickly and affordably than the courts. It also provides tenants and landlords with timely access to specialized, expert, balanced and effective dispute resolution. The board's offices are located across the province and provide convenient service when and where people need it. The board is governed by principles we can all respect: those of fairness, accessibility, customer focus and timeliness.

I hope that all members recognize the benefits of this proposed legislation. Our government has made it a priority to ensure that families have a safe, secure and affordable place to live. Making co-op dispute resolution more efficient, cost-effective and transparent is an important step in attaining that goal.

We recognize the value of co-operative housing to families and individuals across Ontario, and we know that by working to reduce legal fees and helping resolve disputes in a more timely fashion for co-op members and providers, we help support affordable housing in our province. I hope that, in the spirit of partnership and our mutual goal to improve co-op housing in this province, all members will support this important bill.

Speaker, I believe the rest of my time will be taken by the member for Thunder Bay–Atikokan. I want to thank the members for supporting this important bill and I look forward to its speedy passage in this Legislature.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Thunder Bay–Atikokan.

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** Speaker, thank you very much. I'm pleased to take part in the third reading debate of Bill 14, a bill to amend the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006, and the Co-operative Corporations Act.

The people of Ontario deserve the greater fairness, efficiency, accessibility and transparency that these amendments bring to the co-op tenure dispute resolution process. This legislation, if passed, would improve the way non-profit co-op housing boards and their members resolve tenure disputes in Ontario.

Let me speak for a moment about the current status of Ontario's co-op housing sector.

Any discussion of the sector needs to include the co-op housing federation. The Co-operative Housing Federation represents housing co-ops throughout Canada and has been a long-time advocate of legislation that would help ensure that decisions related to tenure disputes are fair to both co-ops and their members.

In our province, the federation's Ontario region office promotes the successful operation of housing co-ops by offering services, including education, to meet their clients' unique needs. It also promotes the growth of co-op housing across the province. The organization also defends the interests of its members and works with regional federations to help co-ops build links with municipal governments. I know many of us in this House, from all three parties, have heard Harvey Cooper speak passionately about getting this bill passed.

1410

Our government values the role played by the federation. We share its commitment to maintaining a strong

and growing co-operative housing sector. Our goal is to improve the current process for terminating occupancy agreements for co-ops by making it less complex, time-consuming and costly.

There are other values and universal principles that guide the entire co-op sector that make it a model for affordable housing in Ontario. Co-ops are democratically governed. Policy decisions are arrived at through the active participation of members based on the principle of one member, one vote. As in any good democracy, elected representatives are accountable to the membership. Co-op members contribute to and democratically control the capital of the co-operative, and at least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative.

The members control their co-ops as autonomous organizations. It is the members who democratically decide if the co-op will enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources.

Co-ops provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers and employees, and share these resources and other tools with other co-ops around the world. They also strive to inform the general public, particularly young people and opinion leaders, about the nature and benefits of co-operatives. Part of that effort includes working for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

Many co-ops are also participating in the federation's 2020 Vision program, designed to help co-ops look at their community values, the quality of their management, governance and environmental sustainability.

Co-ops are open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership without any form of discrimination. Co-ops place special emphasis on engaging and empowering youth, while also finding ways to meaningfully involve seniors in their communities as well.

I think it's important to note that many of those who help run co-ops do so voluntarily. The people they serve are their neighbours and their friends, and the work they do enhances the lives of people living in Ontario. In summary, it's a forward-thinking attitude and the values of an inclusive and accepting environment that make co-ops exceptional. Because of these values, co-op housing can help build strong communities. These are values our government shares, and it is easy to see why everyone in this House, we hope, will be supporting this bill.

The proposed legislation would amend the Residential Tenancies Act and the Co-operative Corporations Act to move most co-op tenure disputes from the courts to the Landlord and Tenant Board. Under the Residential Tenancies Act, the Landlord and Tenant Board is responsible for resolving rental housing disputes. In this capacity, the board has a dual mandate. First, the Landlord and Tenant Board exercises a quasi-judicial function by hearing and determining all questions of law and fact under the act.

Second, the board is required to give information to landlords and tenants about their rights and obligations.

The board handles a large volume of cases due to the significant number of renters in Ontario, which represent approximately 29% of Ontario's households. Annually the board hears about 80,000 cases. About 55,000 of those, or 68% of these, relate to landlords evicting tenants, usually due to rental arrears.

The board provides and delivers an efficient and high-quality service to its tenants and the landlords. At present, co-op tenure disputes, on the other hand, need to be brought before the courts. The number of cases is estimated to be about 350 per year.

If passed, this legislation would mean that the same protections, most of the same benefits and the same responsibilities afforded to landlords and tenants facing tenure disputes under the Residential Tenancies Act would be extended to co-op providers and their members.

A co-op member facing eviction would now have the right to a hearing before the board and have better access—and I think this is key to underscore, Speaker—to affordable legal representation, such as paralegals and on-site duty counsel.

Both the co-op providers and members would be able to seek mediated settlements. This means the provider and member could ask a mediator from the board or outside the board to try to help them reach their own agreement.

Mediators assist the parties in focusing on their interests so they can find potential solutions to satisfy these interests. This process can be more collaborative and more informal, and can often feel fairer to the parties involved.

In all cases, tenure dispute resolution applications would be based on merit, giving co-op providers and members equal opportunity to present all the facts they believe are relevant to the board.

Specifically, under the proposed legislation, co-ops would be able to seek resolutions to disputes through the Landlord and Tenant Board for such things as arrears, persistent late payment of rent or housing charges, illegal behaviour, interfering with reasonable enjoyment, and willful damage.

Tenure disputes outside the scope of the act, however, would continue to be handled through the internal, democratic co-op eviction process and the courts. Because co-ops are governed democratically through a board elected by their members, this process is being retained. Co-op members can still vote to establish bylaws that set out grounds for evictions that are not provided for under the act.

The proposed legislation would also amend the Co-operative Corporations Act to streamline and improve the current internal eviction processes of non-profit co-op housing.

This proposed legislation would make the dispute resolution process fairer, simpler and more accessible, while protecting the autonomous nature of housing co-operatives. While co-op members would not have the

right to make applications to the Landlord and Tenant Board, the rights of co-op members to use internal co-op processes and to apply to the courts regarding co-op issues would be maintained.

Current co-op law and policies regarding housing charges and other requirements of membership would remain the same, and the unique system of co-op housing would be recognized.

These rights have been put in place to protect both tenants and landlords and, if the legislation is passed, would be passed on to co-op providers and members as well.

The main goal of this legislation is to streamline the dispute resolution process mandated by the co-op corporations act. We want to accomplish it by simplifying the internal process and shortening the time required to resolve these disputes.

By allowing for the use of the expertise of the Landlord and Tenant Board, our proposed legislation, if passed, would allow access to established infrastructure and procedures designed to deal with tenure disputes.

Bringing cases before the Landlord and Tenant Board may bring additional safety benefits to co-op providers and members. A fast-track eviction process is provided by the Residential Tenancies Act under special circumstances such as illegal drug activity or any activity seriously impairing the safety of others. The fast-track provisions cut the eviction process time approximately in half, and include the following: Hearings at the Landlord and Tenant Board are scheduled more quickly; the eviction order must include a request that the sheriff speed up the enforcement of the eviction; and the board may order the tenant to be evicted immediately.

Still, under the act, every tenant facing eviction has the right to a hearing at the board. Disputes would be fairer to tenants, as cases would be judged on merit rather than on procedure. The new approach would make the co-op tenure dispute process more responsive but also cost-effective.

By design, they are adapted to support low-income individuals and families, many of whom straddle the line of poverty, which is what makes them so important to the fabric of Ontario society. I would also mention that our proposed legislation would allow the Landlord and Tenant Board to waive or defer fees for low-income individuals.

As you know, one of our government's priorities is to move as many Ontarians out of poverty as possible. In December 2008, our government announced its first five-year poverty reduction commitment. Our poverty reduction strategy has helped Ontario's children and families, even in the face of a significant economic downturn.

We remain committed to giving children opportunities to succeed in life, breaking down barriers for low-income Ontarians and working together with our community partners to build a stronger Ontario and a brighter future.

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Some 40,000 children have been lifted out of poverty since 2008. Over one million children in 530,000



families are being helped by the Ontario Child Benefit. Almost 122,000 kids are getting a stronger start in about 1,700 schools through full-day kindergarten. Nearly 33,000 children and young people who may have otherwise gone untreated are receiving free dental care through Healthy Smiles Ontario. An additional 13,000 young people are getting help finding jobs and opportunities through the youth action plan. An estimated 20,000 more children and young people are getting faster and easier access to the right mental health supports, with 600 new mental health workers in schools, communities and the courts.

Now, in the final year of the strategy, we are as committed as ever to continuing to work together to find lasting solutions and to break the cycle of poverty.

We also developed a long-term affordable housing strategy to reduce poverty in Ontario. With this strategy, we aim to improve access to adequate, suitable and affordable housing. Safe, affordable housing provides a solid foundation on which to secure employment, raise families and build strong communities.

We were told through our consultations on the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy that the housing system in its current form was very complicated and created unnecessary barriers. Due to the complex nature of the system, those who deliver the housing programs told us that it was difficult to provide the best possible services to those in need.

Ontario's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy is founded on co-operation with local governments and housing providers throughout the province to find the best solutions that we can. Together, we're creating flexibility for municipalities to allocate resources and meet their local needs.

In conclusion, working together, we can ensure a strong housing sector that serves all Ontarians. That includes co-op housing providers and their members. The co-operative housing sector provides an important and viable choice for Ontario families.

The legislation we propose would make the co-op housing sector fairer, more cost-effective and accessible. By strengthening the co-op housing sector, we are supporting affordable and secure housing for families throughout Ontario.

Speaker, I urge all members to support this important piece of legislation and make a real difference in the lives of working families and for Ontario's most vulnerable households.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** First of all, Mr. Speaker, I just want to welcome Mayor Jim Pickard and Melanie Kirkby, who are here from the township of Elizabethtown-Kitley for a meeting with the Minister of Rural Affairs. Welcome to Queen's Park.

I would like to provide a couple of minutes of questions and comments. I appreciate the minister and the member for Thunder Bay-Atikokan for mentioning the committee. The Legislative Assembly committee dealt

with this matter, I feel, in a very expeditious way. I had tabled a motion that we deal with deputants and clause-by-clause at the same meeting. Unfortunately that didn't happen, but we did deal with committee without amendment so that it could be reported for third reading.

I also want to just take people back. On that day, there was a lot of co-operation that took place at the Legislative Assembly. Not only did we deal with Bill 14—the Financial Accountability Office legislation was already programmed in that committee, I might suggest—but we were also able to have some agreement to be able to schedule Bill 70, which is a private member's bill, that I think we all supported, about spousal exception. We supported moving forward on Bill 55, which was a government bill; and we also helped facilitate the New Democrats in getting Bill 49, Mr. Prue's tip-out bill, before committee.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Yes, absolutely. Give Mr. Prue a round of applause for that.

I think it proved, certainly as a Progressive Conservative, that we were willing to get some of these pieces of legislation that we agree with moving forward to committee and back to the House.

I appreciate members of the Legislative Assembly committee making things happen, and I look forward to some very concise comments when it comes to my turn after these questions and comments.

I'm pleased to support this bill. I think it needs swift passage to help the co-op sector. I appreciate being a part of having a much better experience with Bill 14 than we had with Bill 65 in the last session.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I listened intently to my two colleagues, the Minister of Labour and the member from Thunder Bay-Atikokan. Time will only permit me, I think, to comment on one of the speeches, so I'd like to zero in on what the Minister of Labour had to say. He had me; throughout most of the speech, I was thinking, "I'm in agreement. I'm in agreement. I'm in agreement," until he started talking about the Liberals' wonderful record on providing housing. At that point, I have to say, I was completely lost, because the long-term housing strategy has been an abysmal failure under this government. If ever there was a failure, the 157,000 families on the waiting list in Ontario can tell you that your plan is not working. The 87,000 families who are on the waiting list in Toronto alone can tell you that your strategy is not working.

In terms of how much money is being spent—and he was very proud of that—Ontario ranks last of all 10 provinces and the territories in the amount of money we spend producing housing. A meagre \$64 per capita is all we spend—less than half of what most of the other provinces are spending.

There has been absolutely no action taken by this government, over all of its 10 years in office, on inclusive zoning, which would allow housing to be built, and

so many people in this province—one out of every five—pay more than 50% of their entire incomes on housing, and there is no real plan that the government has brought forward.

This bill is going to help a very small amount, and we're going to support it, because it's a good bill, but please, when you're talking, don't say what a good job you're doing on housing when none of that is correct.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** It's a pleasure to join the debate today on Bill 14. It seems like, from what I'm hearing from those across the floor, this bill may indeed have its day today. I think it has taken a while for us to get here, but all along that time span, what I've been hearing from the opposition parties and from the government is that, in general terms, we have agreement that this is a good bill, and it's a bill that should move forward.

We were able to get it into the committee system, and we were able to hear from others around the province as to what they thought of the bill, and not a whole lot has changed. I think that the co-op housing federation came forward and said, "This is a bill that would really help our members. This is something that this Legislature should be taking a grip on, and some changes that should be made to allow us to run our co-ops more efficiently"—still fairly, but certainly more efficiently.

Currently, the disputes that may take place in a co-op housing environment have to go through the court system, and often just one simple eviction, for example, will take up the entire budget for the year that a co-op has set aside for its legal costs. It seems to me that, as members of all three parties, if we truly believe that the co-op housing sector plays an important role in the provision of housing in this province—it seems to me, by the passage of Bill 14, we will be able to enable co-op housing to play an even larger role, to do even more for the people in our province and for its own members.

A number of people came forward. I've got comments from people from Blue Heron Co-operative Homes, from the Halam Park Housing Co-operative in Hamilton and the Central Ontario Co-operative Housing Federation, and somebody came out from Kitchener. They were all saying pretty much the same thing: that this is a good bill, that the changes that are entailed in this bill are going to make it more efficient and more effective for the co-op housing movement. I'm hoping today that we see that move forward, finally.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** We have time for one more question and comment.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** This bill, as Mr. Clark and others have said, has been discussed until the cows come home. It's good to see that it's back here for third reading.

Technically, I would say that Harvey and his group, the co-op federation, have done a great job in shepherding this thing, to use the same analogy, to the point it is. I understand that our critic, Mr. Clark, will probably try to get this thing moving forward, and that's the whole

issue here. It's pleasant that the Minister of Labour was here to talk about it, as well as others, but more has been said on this than done. They always talk about working for poverty in Ontario. This is one of the steps that still has to be taken.

1430

Our leader, Tim Hudak, made it very clear in question period today that we want to get on with things that will affect jobs and the economy. So if somebody is going to be delaying, dithering or denying—a lot has been said on this bill. It has been to committee. I understand that it's a formality now—and even I am wasting time. I think we should get on with it and bring something substantive to the floor on jobs and the economy.

With that, I look forward to the remarks by our critic Mr. Steve Clark, from the great riding of Leeds–Grenville.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** One of the government members now has the opportunity to reply.

The member for Thunder Bay–Atikokan.

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** Thank you to the members from Leeds–Grenville, Beaches–East York, Oakville and Durham for their comments.

The member from Leeds–Grenville talked about the work at committee regarding Bill 70 and Bill 49. Our members on this side of the House, as well, were very happy to support both of those bills, and we look forward to the work that we're going to do at committee around two of those. Most of us have heard a lot about Bill 70, specifically, and we look forward to that moving forward.

On Bill 14, we're very happy to see, after a great amount of time—I'm not sure if it was all spent well. Nevertheless, in this place, things don't always go as smoothly as you think they should. We are here with what is quite a simple, pointed and consequential bill. We're getting closer to seeing third reading passage of this bill, and I think at the end of the day that's all that we can all hope for and be thankful for. I see some nods from our guests in the east lobby, and we're very thankful for that. At its core, it's about tenure dispute resolutions not having to go to the courts under the Residential Tenancies Act. Of course, they have the rental tribunal available to them. That's what this is going to do for members of co-ops and the co-op providers themselves.

I would say as well, Speaker, that we had about eight or 10 witnesses who came forward at committee last week, and there were a couple of folks who weren't necessarily—they saw some pieces of the bill they weren't supportive of. I would say that in response to those tenant concerns—there were a couple of other tenants who did make presentations, witnesses who were very supportive of the bill.

It was interesting. I've spent about 15 years in the social housing field, and I'll tell you that tenants themselves have great concerns when some of their neighbours are perhaps not conducting themselves in a manner that they should. It affects their enjoyment of the property, the security of their children.



It was really pleasurable for us, as members on this side, to see that support from some of the tenant groups as well.

I thank all members for their comments and look forward to further debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** It's a pleasure for me to provide some comments on Bill 14.

Again, I want to thank Dale, Harvey, Diane, Simone and Judy for being here from the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada, for being so patient.

Listen, folks: I had an hour leadoff at second reading of Bill 65. I had an hour leadoff speech at second reading of Bill 14. The government used about 28 minutes for their speech. I'm not even going to use that. I don't know who's up next for the New Democrats, but I certainly won't be using our hour.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Minister, you're making me feel that you don't like hearing me talk.

Anyway, I just want to make sure people are aware—and the reason why we're not having a lot of debate today—the very first bill on Mr. Wilson's programming motion that he was speaking of, the one we wanted unanimous consent, was about Bill 14. We only wanted it to come forward to debate for two hours when it was next called. We're going to stand by that, from our perspective, and speak very short today, hoping that the bill will move forward.

Again, we don't want bills that we agree upon, that were listed in Mr. Wilson's letter to Mr. Milloy—and a copy to Mr. Bisson. We think we can clear the decks and deal with some job creation legislation because we have a plan. We know we have the plan that will get this province back firing on all cylinders to become the economic engine we all know it can be.

I want to thank the federation for their patience.

Again, I want to mention, as the previous speaker Mr. Flynn mentioned—and Mr. Mauro: There were some deputants who came to committee who weren't particularly happy with the co-op sector. There were some issues that they felt needed to be addressed. I want to say on the record that I spoke to all three individuals and certainly communicated to the federation that I would hope that, although their concerns aren't considered in Bill 14, there would be some dialogue between the federation and their co-ops and these members.

I think there's an issue of governance. Obviously, when you're dealing with people who are democratically elected, we need to be able to help them perform those democratic functions of managing co-ops. Again, I want to say publicly that I hope you'll meet with these individuals and with their co-ops, try to become a mentor to them and try to solve some of the issues that they put on the record.

Certainly, I think we could have dragged on the hearings; there were some tenant issues. I had said countless, both in this House and in committee, that at some

point this Legislature—the three parties—need to have some dialogues with tenants and landlords across this province, to deal with issues around the Landlord and Tenant Board. Certainly I brought it up in the House. I haven't had a lot of uptake, although I might say that at Legislative Assembly, we did have sort of a very mini-co-operative discussion about that, and I hope that in the days and months ahead, we can plan for that and have that discussion and allow those people to be able to put their feelings on the record.

Again, with co-ops, I think we're all big fans of co-ops. There are more than 550 non-profit housing co-operatives in Ontario. The thing that I've said at second reading, and I want to put on the record again today, is that it affects almost 90% of the members of the provincial Parliament. Of the 107 ridings, there are 95 ridings that have co-ops in them. I know that I have two co-ops. They're vibrant communities within the city of Brockville, where I had the pleasure of being mayor for about nine years.

I just wish that we could find some co-operation between the three parties to be able to package the good things that happen in co-operatives and be able to use that as sort of a springboard to expand more affordable housing in the province. Certainly, it's not from a lack of discussion of co-ops; we've been discussing co-ops over and over and over again. I want to again commend them.

We did get a chance, though—and I wanted to put this on the record too—to hear about some of the costs. I know that many of us, during second reading, talked about the fact that those few cases—I think there are about 300 cases—that make it out of the co-op democracy into the courts cost about \$1 million. We had some co-ops that appeared before committee that would love to be able to expand their co-opportunities, to be able to provide more affordable housing units, so think about what that \$1 million could have done in those local communities to facilitate affordable housing.

We heard at committee about the thousands of dollars that an individual co-op could cost by going to court to deal with their tenure dispute, so I'm pleased that we had that opportunity to discuss it.

Again, I made my comments clear at the start, that I believe there are far more pressing issues for the three parties to deal with in the Legislative Assembly. I know that my leader, Tim Hudak, and my House leader, Jim Wilson, were very clear this morning, as was I, that we believe we should move forward with these bills that Mr. Wilson listed, that we appear to have agreement upon, that appear to be non-controversial, and we can move forward, hopefully, with having the other parties buy into some of our plan to get people working in this province.

We've got half a million people who are out of work. I think that's shameful, and I think that in a minority Parliament situation, we should do whatever we can do to clear the decks and get on to creating jobs and getting our great province back on the right economic footing.

That's all I have to say. I'm not going to delay. I want this bill to pass. With that, I'm going to sit down and, hopefully, have minor questions and comments.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I'm beginning to understand that down is up and up is down when it comes to the Conservatives.

First of all, my God, a Conservative speaking in favour of not-for-profit housing in either a co-op sector or any sector is just like—I just can't believe it.

I remember a time when the Conservatives came into power after the loss of the NDP government, where we had been pretty aggressive in making sure that affordable housing was being built in this province. One Mike Harris, leader of the Conservative Party, then Premier, essentially turned it on its head. We haven't really funded any not-for-profit housing, co-op or otherwise, in any serious kind of way since probably about 1995.

1440

That you all of a sudden have become a convert—I've got to say, something happened this weekend at your convention. I don't know; it must have been one of those buttons you were looking at or something. It is just amazing that finally we have Conservatives onside, saying they believe in not-for-profit housing; they believe that the government has a role in being able to fund some of these things and that they're a necessary part—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Oh, sorry. No, you're not—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Oh, you liked one? I won't say who said that. That was funny.

The other thing I would just say—boy, I know you like some of those buttons. I remember one in particular I saw.

The other thing I just want to say is that it's interesting: all of a sudden the Conservatives saying they want to co-operate and they want to do things. But the record is, when we debated this at second reading, there were eight New Democrats who spoke, there were nine Liberals who spoke, and there were 29 Conservatives. Clearly, they were trying to hold this up. So all of a sudden, that they are saying they've found religion and they're trying to find some way or other to basically come back and undo some of the filibustering they did last spring, I think, is interesting. So I look forward to a Legislature where up is down and down is up, where the Tories are doing whatever it is that they're doing, and we'll just see where it leads.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, the member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan, I think, put it very, very well. This is a bill that's now in third reading. It's a bill the province needs. I very much agree with my colleague from Leeds—Grenville, who, I may add, is just an excellent hockey player, and I'm looking forward to getting onto the ice with him again.

It's now time to stop hearing the sound of our voices in the Legislature, get this bill to committee, get it passed and get it enacted.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's my pleasure to make a few comments on my esteemed colleague from Leeds—Grenville, who is always out leading. He's always working for his constituents; he's always bringing the important issues to this House and ensuring that they are getting debated.

It's great to see—what we tried this morning again is we tried to move things through Parliament so we can actually get to what Ontarians really want us to be talking about: How are these 500,000 to 600,000 people going to find work tomorrow? How are we going to pay down the debt so those children who are sitting in front of you don't have a \$20,000 deficit the day they're born? How are we going to turn around this great province and be leaders once again?

Today the NDP stood up and yet again confounded us, because they voted against getting things through. They keep saying they're the saviour of the world. For months in here, they called the Liberals corrupt, yet we all know what happened at budget time: They propped them up, Speaker.

I just want to commend all of my colleagues. We came here and said, "You know what? We're going to work with this House. We're going to work with the government to get things through, so we can be talking about the real issues—debt, jobs, and ensuring that Ontario is the leader in Confederation again."

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Speaker, I have been here for a few years, and I have seen this group of people go from youth to middle age, watching this bill go through. They are extraordinarily resilient.

I have to say, Speaker, this bill—and I'm very pleased that it's on third reading. I'm very pleased that there's no indication of prorogation in the near future; that's very good.

This bill allows housing co-ops to operate more efficiently and to contain their costs. It allows for open and democratic decision-making around termination of membership and, in general, makes it far more possible for these democratic communities to function in the way they were intended to function.

I am very pleased to say that I've had a long history with co-op housing. I was one of the group that got the Bain co-operative started in my riding back in the 1970s. I was a teenager then. Speaker, that co-op just recently held the 100th anniversary of the Bain apartments as a building. It was built originally as limited dividend housing by a number of the great families, the great wealthy families, in this city. It went through a period of limited dividend, a period when it was privately owned, a period with Toronto Community Housing, and it's now a housing co-operative.



In discussions with people in that community, people who have lived there from the 1960s to now, the fact that they control their housing, that they have the democratic right to elect and appoint their management, that they have some greater control of their destiny, is of great consequence. What we do with this bill is simply continue putting faith in the democratic instincts of the people of this province.

Speaker, I look forward to having the vote called soon.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes the time for questions and comments. We return to the member for Leeds–Grenville for his reply.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I want to thank, I think, the member for Timmins–James Bay. I want to thank the member from Mississauga–Streetsville—who is a heck of a goal-tender, although I don't know if he fights like the Leafs' goaltender; I've never seen him fight like Bernier—and the members for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound and Toronto–Danforth. I appreciate some of the comments.

I don't necessarily agree with what the member for Timmins–James Bay said. I put some comments on the record on our last day here in June, on behalf of our House leader, Jim Wilson, and talked about some of the bills he said, very publicly, that he wanted to pass. I think it's pretty obvious that we were cut out of the discussion in the last sitting of Parliament. I think we've been pretty clear that there are some bills we can clear the deck on and get on to some more substantive issues about creating jobs and getting our economy back on track. That's what we want to do.

I also don't believe that meeting people from co-ops—I suggest we have co-ops of all political stripes represented. That's one of the things I like about a co-op: I can have a good discussion with someone I may not agree with politically, but I certainly agree with them on how a co-op runs.

I was at a Habitat for Humanity ReStore anniversary in my riding on the weekend—not last weekend but the weekend before; I was in London last weekend. I was in the ReStore and was pretty proud of what they've been able to accomplish in Elizabethtown–Kitley.

I look forward to having this bill hopefully passed and moved forward, a sign that the three parties can actually get together and pass a bill that came out of committee unanimously. Hopefully we can be unanimous today and move it forward for these folks.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** It is indeed a privilege to be able to stand here and give a few words on this bill at third reading. It's a good bill. I mean, I don't think there has been any discussion throughout second reading of the bill, in committee or today that is anything except laudatory of where we're going and what's going to happen as a result.

I am particularly happy, though, to see the new spirit of co-operation that emerged this morning. I didn't see this spirit of co-operation last week. I didn't see the spirit of co-operation the week before that or back before we

adjourned for the summer. But I do see that co-operation manifesting itself today, and it is a wonderful thing to behold. To all those who have decided we can now get things done by working together and finding common ground, I thank you, because that is really the way this Legislature should work, although all too often it is the way it does not.

This bill has taken a long time. This bill was a gleam in the eyes of those people sitting here in the gallery today. In 2004, they advocated for this bill. They came to this Legislature looking for support to say, "Can we pass the co-op bill?" It's a relatively minor bill in terms of what it's attempting to do; that is, streamline the process around evictions. That's the major thing the bill does. In 2004, they wanted this because it was going to help the co-operative movement, and here we are, nine years later, about to do it.

Since 2007, this government said they were going to pass this bill, and the bill was relatively short. As I said, there's not much contained within the bill. It's a few amendments to the co-op housing act, and that's what it is. And between the time when it was promised by the government, we've had prorogations, we've had elections being called, we've had bills reintroduced, we've had stalling, we've had filibusters, we've had everything else you can possibly imagine, only to come full circle today, where everybody is in approval of it.

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So I want to thank the people who are here today. I want to thank you, because you believed. There are many who would have walked away. There are many who would have gotten so frustrated in thinking that the day would ever come when members would stand in this House and say they were all in agreement and that we should pass a good bill, because it was a good bill.

Be that as it may, I'm very proud that we in this party have always supported this bill; we think that it should pass, and hopefully will pass today. In fact, I don't know about the other parties, but I assume—since I am likely to be the only speaker for my party—that the others may not be putting up additional speakers as well. Maybe today will be the day that the co-op movement can put on a calendar, maybe declare it some kind of holiday and celebrate the 23rd of September every year as the day that the Legislature finally came to its senses and everybody there finally understood what needed to happen.

Co-ops are a very integral part of this province. There are 550 co-ops, I understand, housing 125,000 people—about 1% of the population of Ontario lives in a co-op. In my view, from my own understanding of co-ops in what I see in and around my riding in Beaches–East York, they are probably amongst the finest methods of housing or places where people live. If you want to look at a whole row of apartment buildings, and look at the one which is the best kept—the one with the nicest lawn, the one with the best flowers, the one with a lobby that's welcoming and inviting, where everything seems to be clean and

ordered—I will guarantee you, almost without a doubt, that that will be the co-op. That's just the way it is.

I wish that there was more opportunity for co-ops. I know that at one time 25% or so of all the money that went into new affordable housing went to co-ops. Sadly, in Ontario, that's down to about 4% today, and that is simply not good enough. If we are desirous of building affordable housing, we should leave the building of that affordable housing to the people who know how to do it the best—not exclusively, because there are some church groups and others who can do it fairly well as well, but I think that we should be investing and allowing more money to be invested in co-ops, in order to build the housing that we so desperately need in this province. We need to find homes for 187,000 people on the wait-list, especially—because I'm from Toronto—for the 67,000 families who are waiting here.

When you live in a co-op, I think you have an improved sense of community, and that's why the buildings are the best. Not only do you have an improved sense of community but, because you know your neighbours—you have democratic interactions with them, there are local meetings held on improvements and changes to the co-op where you live—the social services that are provided there and the inclusion make everybody feel that they belong. Very often, it's been my experience that when people live in a co-op, they don't want to leave, so the turnover can be rather slow on occasion. People have their names down for a good long time trying to get into a co-op, as their preferred method of housing.

I think this bill will accomplish a great deal that's already mostly been talked about, but just to reiterate a little bit: It will make sure that it is possible to send issues to the Landlord and Tenant Board as opposed to the courts. This will be an immense savings of up to \$5,000 per case, as I am given to understand it, and by three or more months over the resolution system that we have now—that is, the courts. It's going to save the co-ops money, but it's also going to save the tenants money, as well, if they are facing eviction.

It's going to help the residents, who may not be eligible for legal aid if they have to go to the court but would be eligible for mediation before the Landlord and Tenant Board, and it will free up the courts. It may not be monumental, but however many cases can be taken out of the court into a binding resolution dispute system like the Landlord and Tenant Board, that is better for our court system, because heaven knows that many of our cases drag out in the courts for far too long. Just to remove some of those cases will be a help to all Ontarians.

As I said, the co-ops will see a fairer, less costly system. They will see fees go down for themselves. They'll see a faster process to get rid of those tenants who are not paying their rent or for whom there are problems. The members will see a fairer system, a less costly system for themselves. They won't have to hire lawyers should matters end up in courts.

I want all of the members to support this, and then after we support this to turn our attention to some of the issues that my colleagues from the government spoke about earlier, about building affordable housing: about setting realistic targets for Ontario that we can actually meet, because we haven't met them in the last few years; about putting some money aside in the budgets for projects of building new housing where it's needed; about passing laws for inclusionary zoning to allow people throughout this province to live where they choose to live and where the buildings can be built; about putting in housing benefits for increasing numbers of our working poor who are having a hard time making ends meet; and for investing in the existing stock, much of which is 50 or more years old and is starting to show great signs of wear and tear. That's where we need to turn our minds to, and we need to allow the co-op movement to do what they do best.

Back to the beginning where I started, Mr. Speaker: I think we need to pass the bill today, and I'm very hopeful that we will. I think we need to keep the commitment that we made to the co-op movement back in 2007, but we need to do more than that. We need not only to pass this bill but to recognize them for the type of really wonderful Ontarians that they are, for the service that they have provided and for the services that they will continue to provide. It's not just enough to give them a dispute resolution system which is better than the existing one, but I think we need to understand how diligent and how strong they have been since 2004 to get this little tiny piece of legislation passed.

We need to reward them in other ways. We need to look them in the eyes and we need to say, "We trust the co-operative movement." We know that it is able to build housing. We know that it is able to manage housing. We know that it is able to bring a sense of community to all those that require it. We know in our own hearts that we can do much more for those who need to live in a decent, clean, affordable place. These are the men and women who can do that.

As much as we are saying those things today about a dispute resolution system, we need to start working on increasing the numbers and qualities of affordable housing, and we need to start with the best partners we could ever have: those from the co-op housing movement. That would be my speech, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnett):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Like my colleague from Timmins—James Bay, I don't know what happened this weekend at your convention, but I guess there was a bunch of the good, Bill Davis PC persons who were there and told them that Ontarians have elected a minority government, so you have to work together to adopt these good bills like Bill 14 that is just before me—those good PCs who built those 60 subway stations. So we hope that they took a lesson from them.

Bill 14: I'm a big fan of the co-op. I started my political career in social housing. Your government was in



power at the time. I was not permitted to get the people involved in the construction. At the time, we were constructing a little bit of a Taj Mahal, where people didn't have to contribute to the well-being of the project. They were sitting there, and there were paid people who were doing the cleanup, picking up after them, putting the garbage away and all of this. Even if I wanted to develop this new model on the basis of a co-op where everybody contributes—it's like they are in their own home. There's nobody to put out the garbage. I have to. When my husband is not there, I put the garbage out and I pick up the paper and all that is in the yard. But no, they didn't want us to bring about this model.

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I congratulate every one of you who has been here for so many days. You should never have had to sit here for all these days. Let's hope we're going to adopt Bill 14 today.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I guess sometimes when you try to work with this government, you get criticized. We're sitting back and want to see something on the table that's actually going to get people back working. We've said that all along, and we just don't see anything. They said they can't get at anything important because they're tied up with all these important bills that we see in front of us, like the wireless act, where the CRTC has already covered everything that's in it. We've got the tanning beds. These are crucial things that will get people back to work. We're saying that if that's the case, let's get these off the docket and see if you have something that will actually get people working. We don't believe it, but maybe there is something. I know the government's getting tired and is out of ideas. We're willing to work with them. We've been offering ideas.

I see that today there was unanimous approval asked—and it was turned down again—to get things moving. We don't know who is actually holding things up, whether it's the third party or the Liberals.

Anyway, people have told us that they want to see some ideas, and we're anxious to see if there are ideas on the other side. We'll work through that. I think it's getting crucial. We see what's happened to Detroit, going bankrupt. We have to start attacking our debt. We have to start doing things that will actually stop putting the bill on our grandchildren and our children. I think it's only right that we start paying for things before we have no money left to pay for important services and benefits and health care, because we'll be paying insurance at such a level that we'll have nothing left.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I hear a lot of chatter from the third party, so I'm looking forward to hearing what's being said. It's time for something more than just chatter.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Of course I appreciate, as always, the opportunity to rise and speak to the bills that

are before us. As I gather, this bill has been before this Legislature many, many times, in various incarnations, and I want to applaud those who are here today again witnessing due process of the Legislature and hoping that it happens expeditiously, as do those who are members of co-operatives. Of course, folks would know that in—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Speaker, I would hope you'd get on top of the heckling that's happening in here going on here—and it's coming from my own members.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Timmins–James Bay, come to order.

Member for Essex.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Thank you, Speaker. I couldn't even hear myself think here.

My point was—now that I've got everyone's attention; that was a great interjection, Speaker—that in the New Democratic caucus we appreciate what co-operatives bring. In fact, those of you would know that our original party was the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, the CCF. It makes up a large component of our belief system. The fact that various folks and aspects of our society can come together to further our cause and, in this case, further affordable housing—what a wonderful endeavour, what a wonderful initiative, one that this government certainly should promote. We've heard eloquently from the member from Beaches–East York, who has a long history in terms of municipal housing and working on those types of campaigns, that this government hasn't done enough. Here's one small step—one that we can act on immediately. I certainly look forward to getting things done early enough in this session that we can head back to our ridings in the winter and know that we actually accomplished something.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Oakville.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I've heard all three parties speak on this bill now. It has had exhaustive debate. We've got some people from the co-op housing federation who have joined us, I think, for just about every day and every hour of that debate. They're so close to having this passed, I think they can taste it. To allow this to go on any more I think would be getting to the point of cruelty, so I would ask that we call the vote soon and let these people have what they came for.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

I'm sorry; I apologize. The member for Beaches–East York has two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Although I can agree with my colleague from Oakville, I think the people here are going to have to listen to two more minutes.

I want to thank the Minister of Community Safety, the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, the member from Essex and the member from Oakville for their comments.

I think what has been said here over the last hour or so has been really quite poignant. It's been important, and I

hope it makes people realize that the purpose and the reason that we are here is not always—although sometimes it can be good-natured—to poke fun at each other, not always to say that the other side is wrong, but to look to the commonality, to look to what is important in the legislation and what is required in the province of Ontario, and to somehow, after the whole machination of government, after everything goes into that black box, come out the other end with a finished product with which everyone can be happy.

This group of men and women who are here today to witness this have waited a long time. They've waited a long time for a very simple ask, and that is that the dispute resolution mechanism be changed for co-operatives to make it similar to, if not identical to, that of other tenants who live in private developments. I am pleased that we have been able to, as a group, after dozens and dozens of speeches at second reading, after a day or two at committee, come to the conclusion that the bill was sound, it didn't need any amendments, and that all parties can see the wisdom contained within the body of the bill. I wish the members here good luck in making it happen.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

Mr. Naqvi has moved third reading of Bill 14, An Act to amend the Co-operative Corporations Act and the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of non-profit housing co-operatives and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

I wish to inform the House that I've received a deferral notice from the chief government whip, and as such, this vote will be deferred until tomorrow at the time of deferred votes.

*Third reading vote deferred.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Orders of the day? I recognize the Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1509.*



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

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Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Samia–Lambton	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craiton, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Holyday, Douglas C. (PC)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
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Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
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MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
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<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
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<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
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Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
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Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
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Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
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Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
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## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature



## Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

## Journal des débats (Hansard)

Tuesday 24 September 2013

Mardi 24 septembre 2013

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 24 September 2013

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 24 septembre 2013

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### WASTE REDUCTION ACT, 2013 LOI DE 2013 SUR LA RÉDUCTION DES DÉCHETS

Mr. Bradley moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 91, An Act to establish a new regime for the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste and to repeal the Waste Diversion Act, 2002 / *Projet de loi 91, Loi créant un nouveau cadre pour la réduction, la réutilisation et le recyclage des déchets et abrogeant la Loi de 2002 sur le réacheminement des déchets.*

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Ottawa–Orléans. I rise today to begin second reading debate of Bill 91, the proposed Waste Reduction Act.

Before I begin, I would like to recognize a delegation from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, who are here in the gallery this morning. In no particular order of importance—we're going to share the level of importance today: Catherine Brown, senior adviser at AMO; Ben Bennett, executive director of the Municipal Waste Association; Dave Gordon, manager, sustainable waste management for the regional municipality of York; Laura Malyjasiak, from the region of Durham; Russ Powers, president of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario; Nicholas Ruder, policy adviser, Association of Municipalities of Ontario; Vincent Sferrazza, director of solid waste management services, city of Toronto; Monika Turner, director of policy, Association of Municipalities of Ontario; Pat Vanini, executive director, Association of Municipalities of Ontario; and Peter Veiga, supervisor of waste operations, region of Durham. Welcome.

In June, I introduced this bill as a way forward to break Ontario's recycling logjam, boost diversion rates and establish a system that encourages the private sector to invest in more recycling and jobs in our province. The central pillar of the act is individual producer responsibility for the environmental fate of the products they sell.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind the House why Ontario needs this proposed legislation. We

know recycled materials have tremendous value as a resource. In Ontario, we are seeing more and more companies seizing the opportunities recycling presents and boosting Ontario's economy when they do so.

Canada Fibers created 100 new jobs when it opened a new recycling facility in Toronto this summer. This plant has the capacity to process more than 60 tonnes of blue box waste every hour. It is the largest single-stream recycling facility in all of North America.

Progressive Waste Solutions opened a new processing plant in Concord that has the ability to process 100,000 metric tonnes of waste wood, steel, aluminum, cardboard, plastics and drywall every year from the construction, demolition and renovation sector. Up to 85% of that waste will ultimately be turned into new products and green fuel for power generation. This new plant is creating 50 new jobs.

These are examples of the positive impact recycling has on our economy. The Ontario Waste Management Association tells us that the waste management sector in this province generates more than \$3 billion in revenue and invests \$300 million in infrastructure annually.

A separate study found that for every 1,000 tonnes of waste we recycle, seven new jobs are created. In fact, recycling generates 10 times the number of jobs as disposal at a landfill.

While we are deriving some of the benefits of recycling under the current Waste Diversion Act, we are missing many more environmental and economic opportunities to recycle. Here is the size of the opportunity we are missing without the reforms embodied in the Waste Reduction Act: up to \$1 billion in private sector recycling investments, generating 5,000 direct jobs, and more when the spinoff of employment is counted. We are currently wasting far too much recyclable material in landfills.

While Ontario's waste diversion programs recycle just over a million tonnes of waste every year, our overall waste diversion rate lags behind other jurisdictions in Canada and around the world. The industrial, commercial and institutional sectors generate the majority of waste in the province but recycle only a small portion of it—a mere 11%.

Some companies are taking the challenge of waste diversion very seriously. General Motors of Canada has achieved diversion rates of more than 93% at its Woodstock parts distribution centre. Exhibition Place, Toronto's largest entertainment venue, has more than 5.2 million visitors a year and diverts 79% of its waste. Teknion, the Toronto office systems and furniture pro-



ducts manufacturer, increased its waste diversion rate from 40% to a very remarkable 88% in 2011.

These are great successes, but it's clear we need to see much more in the way of leadership in this sector. Recycled materials use less energy, produce fewer greenhouse gas emissions and have fewer environmental impacts than extracting raw materials. For example, one tonne of recycled paper uses 50% less water than virgin pulp and results in 74% less air pollution and 35% less water pollution.

Composting organic waste diverts a large portion of the waste stream from disposal, produces high-quality soil enhancer with a variety of end uses, conserves landfill space and reduces the production of leachate and methane gas.

More recycling keeps more waste from littering our land and fouling our lakes and streams.

0910

Householders are doing an admirable job—that's through the blue box—keeping beverage containers, plastics and printed paper out of our landfills. Individuals also recycle their used tires and old electronics, as well as paint and other hazardous household waste, to keep these from polluting our lands and water.

But taxpayers and consumers are paying for the costs of recycling when they buy some products, and their taxes also pay for the end-of-life management of these same products. For these reasons and more, the proposed Waste Reduction Act is needed to fix what essentially, in my belief and I think the belief of many, is a broken system. We need the Waste Reduction Act to attract new investment, create new jobs, foster innovation, conserve resources and better protect our environment.

The new proposed Waste Reduction Act, if passed, would make individual producers responsible for the end-of-life management of their products and the packaging. It would also reintroduce competition into the recycling market, spurring much innovation. Under the proposed act, producers would have a financial incentive to develop products that are designed, manufactured and distributed in ways that reduce their impact on the environment. Their recycling costs would be, in fact, lower. The act would also allow us to kick-start recycling in the IC&I sector by designating waste for diversion. The place to start would be to designate paper and packaging supplied to the sector.

The proposed act recognizes the important role that municipalities and property taxpayers play in recycling waste by lifting the 50% funding cap on producers' contribution to the blue box program. That has been a matter of contention for years, where municipalities believe they shouldn't be paying that 50%; they believe that the producers themselves should assume a greater cost of that and municipal taxpayers a lower portion of that. A new balance would be achieved through negotiations with the municipalities and the producers. It would protect consumers from surprises at the cash register by requiring recycling costs to be included in the advertised, displayed and shelf prices of products; and it would

transform Waste Diversion Ontario into the Waste Reduction Authority, with compliance, oversight and enforcement powers. The authority would also be responsible for ensuring a timely transition of existing diversion programs in a way that is easy and convenient for our residents.

The Ministry of the Environment has had a busy summer consulting with municipalities, producers, retailers, service providers and others in the waste management system to get more in-depth feedback on the proposed legislation. We have been carefully reviewing the public and stakeholder feedback on the act and accompanying strategy. In listening to our partners, we have heard broad support for the approach proposed in the Waste Reduction Act, which ensures that individual producers take responsibility for the end-of-life management of the products that they sell.

The Ontario Waste Management Association told my ministry, "The proposed Waste Reduction Act and strategy reflects a reasonable balance of the solutions brought forward through numerous consultations and proposals from all political parties." The Association of Municipalities of Ontario confirmed that with their quote that said, "AMO is supportive of the proposed Waste Reduction Act and Waste Reduction Strategy and the environmental principles embedded throughout the documents." The Retail Council of Canada, which represents thousands of department, specialty, discount and independent stores and on-line merchants, said, "Clear and achievable recycling requirements are essential tools to create a level playing field between all stakeholders involved in waste diversion and that retailers are consulted in their design."

Sims Recycling Solutions—a global leader in the recovery of waste electronics, I think people would agree—congratulated the Ministry of the Environment for seeking to make changes that will lead to a more effective waste and resource management reality in Ontario.

There are, of course, many differing opinions on the specifics; that is to be expected. That is why we are continuing to work with our partners to strike the right balance between the many different and sometimes competing needs and priorities involved.

If the proposed bill becomes law—of course, I would be delighted if it were to do so—we intend to roll out the new waste reduction framework in an integrated fashion that will maximize opportunities to engage with stakeholders. That's extremely important. We understand it is a complex issue, and we are fully prepared to roll up our sleeves and work with our stakeholders to make sure we get this right.

Without the new approach to recycling embodied in the Waste Reduction Act, we run the risk of not only jeopardizing future achievements in recycling and economic growth, but also rolling back the successes we've achieved to this date.

I want to make it clear that the government recognizes the important roles municipalities, producers and service providers all play in the success of the proposed framework. Municipalities have spent hundreds of millions of

dollars on infrastructure, public education and the collection and diversion of products for recycling. Municipalities are accountable to their residents for the successful delivery of diversion programs in each and every one of their own communities.

Currently, municipalities bear the burden of residential waste management but have little ability to affect the amount of waste that is created in the first place. Municipalities have indicated they're willing to work with producers. They're open to a change in roles and responsibilities, recognizing the strengths they bring to the collection of materials and the potential for producers to take on greater responsibility for post-collection management.

Producers are ultimately responsible for environmental performance and achieving recycling results and targets. Under an individual producer responsibility model, they can also address the amount of waste produced in the first place, and how easy and inexpensive it is to recycle. The waste management industry also has an important role to play, as these companies provide innovative solutions that support transforming waste into new products that create new jobs.

The proposed act would provide authority to make individual producers legally obligated to meet the waste reduction objectives for their products. The changes we are proposing will have a positive impact on the marketplace: It will free up and unleash the innovative energies of competition.

Managing waste is also affected by the increasingly complex global manufacturing and supply systems of national and international companies. We want to ensure that our approach gives producers that operate in a global marketplace the flexibility to decide on how to meet their recycling requirements. The proposed act will help, not hinder, national harmonization programs. We are listening to stakeholders to achieve a balance that ensures the impact is a net positive for everyone involved.

We recognize the important roles of producers and municipalities alike. Take, for example, the blue box, the crown jewel of Ontario's recycling programs. For more than 25 years, producers, municipalities and service providers have worked together to build the blue box into what it is today: a highly successful program that enables residents to conveniently recycle material that otherwise would be destined for a landfill. Producers and municipalities have together invested more than \$1 billion in a successful program that is now emulated around the globe.

Currently, municipal taxpayers foot the bill for half the cost of the blue box program. A move toward greater producer funding aligns with the overall principles of individual producer responsibility.

0920

At the same time, we also know that as we look to the future we may need to think about better, more efficient ways to deliver and fund the blue box. Coming up with those solutions needs to be a collaborative effort between producers, municipalities, service providers and the

provincial government. These solutions have to be fair and balanced and reflect the unique advantages and strengths that different stakeholders bring to the table. This may require stakeholders to work together to discuss what, if any, changes may be made to the existing provisions of regulation 101 to reflect their proposed solutions.

I understand producers feel that if they pay more, they should be more involved in how their money is spent and managed. I recognize those concerns. No one wants to write a blank cheque. I do not believe municipalities are asking for a blank cheque, and it is certainly not the intention of the proposed legislation to provide one. Under the proposed act, municipalities and producers are free to negotiate agreements that reimburse municipalities for their reasonable costs incurred when collecting designated wastes.

We will propose clarifications to address the concerns we have heard when the bill goes to committee. We will also consider what other changes can be made to mitigate the potential cost impact on producers. My colleague and parliamentary assistant, Phil McNeely, will speak to the Waste Reduction Authority and how we intend to transition to the new model in a few moments.

In summary, why do we need to replace the Waste Diversion Act? Well, it has some success in recycling selected end-of-life products, including household hazardous waste, used tires and electronics, but the successes have been limited by a lack of legislative teeth and enforcement, and unacceptably low rates of recycling in the industrial, commercial and institutional sectors.

We have seen some companies step up, and it's always a delight to do so. Brampton's Loblaw diverts 81% of waste generated by its network of distribution centres and has reduced the number of plastic bags in stores by more than five billion—yes, that's billion—since 2007. Unilever Canada, through a combination of source separation, reuse, recycling and composting programs, sends no non-hazardous waste to landfill from its manufacturing facilities and continues to work to design packaging that minimizes material use. Walmart Canada's Canadian stores divert more than 80% of waste, with the goal of recycling 90% of waste by 2015.

Despite the best efforts of householders, municipalities, stewardship organizations and progressive producers and retailers like these, the old system simply is not working. Recycling progress in our province has bumped its head on the Waste Diversion Act's ceiling for too long. The purpose of the proposed act is to boost recycling and reduce landfill disposal. The strategy of the Waste Reduction Act is to use individual producer responsibility to unleash the innovative energies of competition in the marketplace. Ontario needs the Waste Reduction Act to forge a new partnership between those who make up Ontario's waste sector. The success of our strategy depends on a collective vision and effort to harness the value of waste to create new opportunities, investments and jobs. Realizing that means building on the strengths of our partners and working together. In this regard, I



urge all members to give serious consideration and ultimately support this legislation.

When legislation is brought forward to the Legislative Assembly, where we are fortunate to sit this morning and to deliberate on important subjects of this kind, there is an opportunity for all to have input. It was my goal, and the goal of the Ministry of the Environment and the government, to involve many different sectors, many different individuals and many different groups in the development of this legislation, and so there was widespread consultation previous to the bill. I welcomed the opportunity to meet with both of the opposition critics, the one for the official opposition and the one for the third party, and I found their input to be of value. They as well would have heard from various sectors the views that might be brought forward on legislation of this kind.

Ultimately, I think that the bill that we see before us and the strategy paper that went with it both reflected that widespread consultation. It's nice when you're in government to be able to bring forward legislation of this kind, because ultimately government has that responsibility and opportunity, but what we have seen with this legislation is the opportunity for all members of the House who have an interest in it to have brought forward their ideas. Their ideas, from time to time, are reflected in components of the legislation.

We also know that legislation goes through various steps. First of all, we have the introduction of the bill; normally, there is not a debate and often not a standing vote on that, and it receives approval on its introduction. That is routine. Second reading allows us an opportunity to canvass the various issues in a general sense that revolve around a bill of this kind, and we do look forward to some debate in that regard. In a bill of this kind, I think what is going to be particularly significant is the committee stage, where we have the opportunity to hear from the various sectors out there—from individuals, from environmental groups and so on—that they might have some concerns, recommendations or endorsements of particular parts of the legislation. I look forward to that particular aspect of this legislative process.

I think this bill is a good bill, quite obviously; I would not have brought it forward. When I listened to those I talked to, including the opposition critics, I was keen to hear in principle, before the bill came before the House, what their concerns would be, what they felt would be a reasonable component of the bill and what their approach would be. Not all of that is ever going to be reflected in legislation, but I think you can see some of it in this legislation. I don't look at this as a bill brought forward by an individual minister—an individual minister's bill or a government's bill. I look forward to it as a bill that is debated and ultimately a bill for which all of us in the Legislature can claim some considerable credit. It's a bill that is required.

There have been some significant efforts in the past. Those efforts have, as I mentioned in my earlier remarks, borne some fruit, but we also see the frustration of it not working as well as it might. In fact, Environmental

Commissioner Gord Miller, early on, when I became the Minister of the Environment, commented on the lack of progress that we have made as a province in diverting waste and said that this would be a challenge we should be looking forward with. I appreciated his activity as an independent officer of this House in bringing people together from various sectors to get their views and to try to forge the best consensus possible at the time. There were others who played that role along the way.

Some of us have also had an opportunity to tour some of the new recycling plants that are out there, and "astounding" is not too strong a word when you look at what is being done in that sector today. If you had said to me a dozen years ago that we would see the kind of plants that we see out there now, creating jobs, diverting waste and making money in doing so, one might have said, "That is a lofty goal, but it will not be achieved." We see concrete examples of that, and I believe we will see more of that in the future.

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I know that my parliamentary assistant, the member for Ottawa-Orléans, shares my enthusiasm for this particular piece of legislation. Indeed, I welcomed his input, and he has welcomed the input of others he has talked to around the province, just as, I think, all members of the Legislature have welcomed the input.

We recognize that, as I say, there's some great support. I've read a couple of quotes, but there are other quotes as well, supportive of this legislation. There has been some editorial support across the province for the legislation as well. We recognize, when you get down to the details, that there are going to be compromises that always have to be worked out. I think all of us in this House are going to be interested not only in hearing from one another—and that's going to be important: to have people taking notes as others are speaking in the House to see what they have concluded and ideas they've had that perhaps might be included in the bill and might alter the bill. So that's going to be an exceedingly important aspect of it as well. But it is my hope—and it's a hope, I think, that is based on confidence that members of this House believe this is an issue that must be tackled, and tackled soon—that we will see a passage in this House that is faster than some of the legislation I have seen in the past. As I say, getting to the committee aspect is going to be exceedingly important.

So I thank all members of this House for their input; those who have written to me, written to the government or made presentations when there was an opportunity to do so. I think we have an opportunity together to achieve considerable success in this province with the passage of this legislation.

I'm never presumptuous. First of all, one is in contempt of the House if one presumes that legislation automatically passes. But in my experience in this House—which has been a few years—I have noted that the most successful legislation is that which is appropriately debated, which has excellent committee time to deal with it and ultimately is legislation that will benefit the people

of this province. I believe that the Waste Reduction Act is that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments? The member for Ottawa—Orléans.

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm honoured to join Environment Minister Jim Bradley in supporting the proposed Waste Reduction Act this morning. Minister Bradley has already set out the main goal of the proposed act: to make Ontario a leader in keeping waste out of the environment by recycling its value back into the economy. Other jurisdictions have already realized the benefits of adopting an individual producer responsibility model of waste management. It's time we did the same.

We're proposing to work together to capitalize on the innovative ideas here in Ontario. We have an opportunity to open our doors to new investments, new factories and, most importantly, new jobs.

We're proposing an individual producer responsibility model that is made-in-Ontario. That means building on the unique strengths of Ontario producers, municipalities and other partners, and using them to transform the waste management in this province.

Today I want to take you through our proposed waste reduction strategy and some of its economic benefits. The strategy is a blueprint for how we could make this approach work in Ontario.

As Minister Bradley has pointed out, the success of this strategy depends on a collective effort amongst all partners involved in managing and recycling our waste—producers to processors, service providers and municipalities—which have been effectively delivering local recycling services for years to our residents.

Our strategy is based on achieving six key results:

- drive economic and environmental innovation by holding individual producers responsible for waste reduction outcomes;

- transform Waste Diversion Ontario into a strong oversight and compliance authority;

- use all-in pricing to ensure consumer protection and incent improved product designs;

- increase support for municipal recycling;

- increase the diversion of a wider range of wastes; and

- transition existing programs in a timely and smooth manner.

Today I will focus on the proposed transformation of Waste Diversion Ontario to a new Waste Reduction Authority with more robust oversight and compliance responsibilities. I will also talk about the importance of a timely and seamless transition to the new system.

First, the Waste Reduction Authority, or WRA: While there is general support for a new authority, there are some concerns about oversight, the composition of the board and whether the authority is the right model to ensure compliance with the new rules. We have proposed an approach that includes several provisions and requirements to ensure appropriate oversight, accountability and transparency. The province would establish collection

and processing standards. The proposed WRA would have powers to ensure compliance with the new rules and take enforcement action when necessary. It would provide oversight and compliance of the proposed Waste Reduction Act and oversee existing waste diversion programs until they are transitioned to the proposed act. The WRA would have inspection powers and be able to issue compliance orders and administrative penalties to producers and to other intermediaries that failed to achieve outcomes.

The WRA would have a number of key responsibilities, including:

- receiving and storing information from producers;

- assessing producers' performance;

- taking graduated compliance and enforcement action against individual producers who perform poorly or don't comply;

- overseeing integrated pricing by undertaking inspections and taking action against non-compliance, false or misleading representations;

- advising governments on specific waste diversion issues;

- facilitating the resolution of disputes between producers and municipalities;

- developing formulae to address municipal compensation;

- educating the public about the act; and

- reporting to the minister and public annually on results.

We recognize the importance of maintaining effective oversight of any external authority. That is why we are proposing the following provisions to help ensure accountability and transparency: We would require the WRA to provide an annual public report on results and compliance actions, including the issuing of administrative penalties and how that revenue was used. The minister could request the WRA to provide advice on specific waste reduction issues and request that the WRA establish advisory councils or processes to seek input from stakeholders on a range of issues. The minister could issue policy direction where it is in the public interest with respect to the performance of the WRA's powers and duties under the proposed Waste Reduction Act. The minister could also require that a review be undertaken of the WRA, or appoint an administrator under special circumstances; for example, if the authority was non-compliant with the act, making it fundamentally unable to perform its duties under the act.

We would enable the Auditor General to audit the WRA. We would limit the WRA's ability to engage in commercial activities with related entities unless the Lieutenant Governor in Council makes a regulation authorizing that activity. We would require the WRA to provide services and information in both English and French. The authority would be independent from the government. Its board may establish bylaws with respect to conflict of interest for members of the board and for the authority's officers and employees.



We heard from stakeholders that there needs to be a mechanism to control the authority's costs. We also heard views about whether the authority's board should be skills-based or representative. We will be considering all of the feedback we've received as we take the next steps with the proposed act.

We've also heard many comments and suggestions about making the transition to the new model. What would it look like? How fast would it happen? What happens first, and what will be the impact on consumers and on producers? We would first repeal the Waste Diversion Act and incorporate specific provisions relating to the existing four programs and three industry-funded organizations into the proposed new act. This would enable the existing recycling programs under the current act to continue until they can be transferred over to the new individual producer responsibility regime.

We heard from stakeholders that this transition needs to happen in an orderly fashion to minimize the impact on consumers and support producers as they take on the responsibilities that were performed by the industry-funded organizations. We agree, and want to ensure that consumers are always able to rely on accessible and convenient services, so we intend to make this transition gradual.

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The proposed approach recognizes the challenges that may be faced in transitioning the existing waste diversion programs and the potential implications of dissolving industry-funded organizations that were specifically created to develop and deliver programs. The province will help ensure that the WRA works with impacted organizations to mitigate the risks of any interruption to convenient and accessible waste reduction services. We'll also be working extensively with the existing industry-funded organizations, producers, municipalities, waste management service providers and the public on how to make this transition as seamless and as efficient as possible.

We will recognize the success and uniqueness of the blue box program as we begin discussions on that program, as well as regulation 101, which sets out municipal roles and responsibilities. We'll also consult on the best timelines for designating waste under the proposed legislation. In fact, as Minister Bradley has noted, we'll be consulting extensively every step of the way.

All of the partners involved in managing Ontario's waste have a vested interest in making sure this system works as efficiently and effectively as possible. We are all, as consumers, producers, municipalities or service providers, accountable for responsibly using the value of our waste to build a stronger, cleaner future for us all. So we all have an opportunity to really change how we deal with our waste. The existing system is broken. I ask all of you to join the minister to make this a collaborative exercise in making Ontario a leader in waste reduction.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Comments and questions.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Good morning. I'd like to take the opportunity, first off, to thank and welcome the folks from AMO. I would particularly like to thank them for participating last week, too, on the second reading of Bill 73, my Fair and Open Tendering Act. I'd like to thank you for being here again. I know we're talking about different things today, but I did want to make a special mention of my appreciation on that. Unfortunately, we didn't get it past the second reading hurdle, but we will not give up on that one.

That brings us back to Bill 91 today. We're on to newer things. I wouldn't say "bigger and better things"; we are on to newer things. Today we're talking about Bill 91. It was interesting to note how the minister did reference our dismal waste diversion rate: 23%, in fact. The IC&I sector, which represents a significant portion of our waste in Ontario, hovers at the low teens. That really has been, for the last 10 years, a stagnant number. That is a dismal number; in fact, one I know the minister, a former teacher, would say would likely not be a passing grade, should he be marking his own paper. Twenty-three per cent would be, "Try it again. Come back with some better ideas." Ultimately, it's that dismal 23% rate that we desperately need to tackle.

In fact, we ship a third of our waste to the United States every year. I've been on the record of saying that we need to really harness the economic opportunity that comes from within Ontario's waste, when we know that is truly a green economy that we can create, unlike the green economy that we've seen over the last little while, which is actually a job killer. We believe a plan that we announced just last November could really harness that economic opportunity.

I know I'll have plenty of time to get into the depth of our arguments on the next hour that I'll have, and so I'll sit down with that, listen for questions and comments on the initial ministerial remarks, and look forward to joining the debate. Take care.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Davenport.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'm happy to respond to Bill 91 and also to welcome our guests from AMO to the House today. Thank you for being here.

Over the last few months, I've met with many representatives from industry and from waste management, and we spoke with many environmental groups and municipalities about Bill 91. We've heard, from all corners, support for the principles of the legislation, but we've also heard clearly that there are imperfections. The legislation as it stands is not perfect, which is why we need to have this conversation and this debate. But we have heard a real commitment to reduce the amount of waste in our environment and that stakeholders are willing to do that.

There are legitimate concerns raised by all parties. As the legislation goes forward, we must work to balance and address these concerns. We should work to ensure that Bill 91 works for producers, for service providers and for municipalities. Most importantly, though, of

course, we must work to make sure that Bill 91 works for all people in the province of Ontario. As has been mentioned here this morning, Ontario's diversion rates are languishing at, I think, less than 25% right now. Our industrial, commercial and institutional sector is even worse.

It's clear that the system is broken. It needs to be fixed. It's also clear that we can't wait another 10 years to fix it. We need to get down to business and to make this work. The people of the province of Ontario deserve a healthy environment, they deserve good, green jobs, and they deserve timely action from this government. I look forward to continuing to hear from the many stakeholders across Ontario on how to make Bill 91 work. I want to thank them now for the knowledge and the expertise that they have been sharing, and I look forward to continuing this debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** First of all, I'd like to congratulate the minister and the ministry for bringing this bill forward. All I can say is that we probably should have done this four or five years ago so that the eco fee disaster that I was involved in in those days simply wouldn't happen. The reality is that government has to take control of the situation. It is to everyone's benefit that more recycling takes place.

He talked about a number of companies, quite frankly, that are involved in the proper recycling and reuse of those products by either building new material or what have you. I would want every member of this assembly to go out to some of these companies that do the fantastic work that is being done in electronic recycling. We always talk about mining the material for new products etc. Well, the best mining that can take place is the existing material that is no longer utilized for that.

We absolutely have to make the producers of the product responsible for the ultimate cost of disposal—either a new product or whatever. The proper cost of disposal, the proper cost of reusing that material, should be just as much a part of the price of the product as labour and material costs. Once we start accepting that principle of making the producer responsible, the producers will come up with the best methodology from a cost viewpoint to actually make that happen.

I just want to congratulate the minister and the ministry for bringing this bill forward. Let me say something: If any bill, for the benefit of all of the people of Ontario, both today and tomorrow, cries out for support from all sides of the House—leave your partisan politics aside. This is a good way to deal with the environmental situation. Support the bill, because it's good for everyone in this province.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Leeds–Grenville.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Good morning, everyone. I also want to join in welcoming my friends from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario as we debate Bill 91. I look forward to our critic, Michael Harris, the member

for Kitchener–Conestoga, speaking in a few moments on some of the comments that the minister and the parliamentary assistant made today.

It's interesting how they frame their words regarding committee. Even AMO, in their letter to MPPs on the 23rd, talked about getting this to the standing committee and refining it, improving it. I think there's an acknowledgement by the minister that when this bill hits committee—I think we need to have a very structured format on how hearings will take place. The previous speaker, the Attorney General, talked about co-operation. I think there needs to be a general discussion on how this bill will move forward.

I would like to say, on behalf of my municipal friends, that I was disappointed when the Premier met with our leader, Tim Hudak, that some of the bills that this government promised you at AMO would move forward weren't on that list that the Premier gave Mr. Hudak: things like Bill 34; Bill 40, which I want to appreciate you for supporting; Mr. Wilson's bill on arbitration, and I know we're going to have some continued dialogue about that; Bill 73, Mr. Harris's Fair and Open Tendering Act—I appreciate your support. But there's one other issue that I think needs to be addressed by this government when it comes to municipalities.

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I had spoken to Mr. Bartolucci when he was minister, to the Premier when she was minister and to the present minister. We've got some municipal elections coming next year, and we've got no movement by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to put forward legislation regarding much-needed changes to municipalities. They need to get moving; time is of the essence.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The minister has two minutes to respond.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I am delighted to hear the initial positive remarks of members of the Legislature. I think one of the things we determined here is that the need for the legislation is something that all of us agree upon. You don't always get that. Sometimes you'll hear in the House, "Well, we don't need more legislation; we don't need regulations; we don't need policy changes."

In this case, I think there's a recognition that in this province, if we are going to make progress in this field, both environmentally and economically, we're going to have to move forward with legislation that ultimately leaves this House in the form that it does after all considerations have been given. I was pleased that both the official opposition critic and the member for Leeds–Grenville were positive in that fashion, although they did begin to talk about some other bills after that. I am pleased with that.

I think the member for the NDP has really pointed out, appropriately, that we've had a wasted opportunity. Whenever you're sending things for disposal that could be recycled, could be reused, I'm going to say that that is a wasted opportunity environmentally and economically, and I'm glad that he raised that as being pretty fundamental.



It is always easy to oppose and just take all of the arguments of people who don't like legislation and reflect them in your remarks when you're in opposition. Take it from me. I was in opposition and probably guilty of that from time to time. We have an opportunity to turn over a new leaf, however, and I am looking forward to the very positive and constructive comments that will be forthcoming from my friends on the opposite side, particularly the critics, who have taken it upon themselves to become very familiar with the issue and the bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I know I've got now 60 minutes on the clock, and I'm going to take every last minute of it, because I know, as the minister stated earlier, that good pieces of legislation from the government in fact require thorough debate and discussion, and that is exactly what I know the Ontario PC caucus will want to add to this.

Before I get into the major components of my remarks, I think it's important to just quickly address some of the comments that he initially made. I want to thank the minister, obviously, for his speech, but I do want to point out some of the inconsistencies that need to be clarified right up front.

First, the minister said that his bill will introduce individual producer responsibility, or IPR. You'll hear a lot of acronyms, but IPR will be one of them going forward. But anyone, or everyone, actually, following Bill 91 knows this statement simply isn't true. In fact, first, the bill sets up a convoluted process for businesses to join collectives called intermediaries. After joining, the individual business is no longer held responsible; the intermediary is. So the minister's claim about IPR actually contradicts the very system the bill seeks to set up.

Second, IPR would mean, as it has been defined in other jurisdictions, that businesses would be required to actually manage the recycling. Again, Bill 91 does not allow this to happen; in fact, it actually creates a massive bureaucracy to prescriptively manage the entire system.

I would ask that we drop the jargon on the other side. As I'll mention in my remarks coming forward, a big concern for us is that the bill completely ignores the PC plan for waste diversion that we outlined last November; in fact, it continues Waste Diversion Ontario under a new name, the Waste Reduction Authority—so the same folks; just a new sign at the street.

What's more troubling is that this authority will be permitted to impose new taxes and dictate how much businesses will have to pay for the blue box. It will set up a system that will entrench both sides—municipalities and producers—in a constant battle over money when we should be working together to actually improve our environment. As I mentioned before, we introduced a policy last November that actually takes into consideration this important aspect, because we are talking about, first off, the economy, jobs, a green economy that we truly believe will spur economic activity but also help our environment, which is very, very important.

Back to Bill 91, the Waste Reduction Act: I will say that it's disheartening, or I'm disappointed, perhaps, that we're actually considering or debating what I would say is a poorly drafted piece of legislation at this time. But for some reason or another, the minister actually thinks he can slap a bill together, push it through to second reading and get it to committee while doing really no due diligence on the important issues at hand. I've said, and I'll say it again, that I believe they've neglected the basics. For instance, and I mentioned this before, he says his bill is about producer responsibility, yet he forgot to define what a producer actually is. I think you can agree that government bills shouldn't be handled in a haphazard manner, in a way that this one has.

I know you will also agree, Speaker, that pertinent questions should be answered with facts, not lofty rhetoric and conjecture. Unfortunately, though, all we've heard from this minister up until now is a bunch of tall tales and outlandish claims based on nothing more than empty talking points. I know folks are getting tired of that. So I would like to separate some of the spin from the actual contents of the bill that is now before the House. I would like to point out pitfalls, problems and potential for disaster, of which we see many.

I'll briefly outline some of the concerns of the Ontario PC caucus—I know many of them will want to add to the debate with their comments—before dealing with our stance on the bill in greater detail later in my remarks.

Our first concern is that the Liberals have completely ignored the PC waste diversion plan, which would have provided better protection for consumers, taken greater steps to improve the environment, and harnessed the ingenuity and innovation of the private sector to create good-paying true green jobs. Instead, the Liberals claim to have followed our lead while their flawed bill reveals that they really intended to take Ontario in a totally different and completely counterintuitive direction, a direction that involves new taxes—I know they're famous for that; more bureaucracy; less accountability—we all know that that's a track record of this current Liberal government; and of course, the continuation of Liberal eco-tax schemes.

As a result, we know this bill will be bad for consumers, who will have to continue to pay eco taxes and will also be forced to pay new taxes, in fact, to fund the Liberals' expansion of its recycling bureaucracy, which you heard of earlier this morning. In fact, we know this bill will be bad for our economy because it allows government to siphon money out of our productive businesses and consumers' pockets in order to subsidize certain industries. We know this bill will be bad for Ontario businesses, which will have to raise prices at a cost of driving consumers to make more purchases perhaps online or even across the border. We know this bill will be bad for our environment because it focuses more on perpetrating a fight between municipalities and businesses over money rather than setting priorities to reduce the amount of waste actually going into our landfill. We know this bill will not help job creation because the new

taxes and red tape contained in it will force a loss of jobs in one sector in order to replace them with new, subsidized jobs in another sector.

In short, we know this bill is the wrong direction for Ontario consumers, a wrong direction for Ontario businesses and a wrong direction for our environment, our economy and our province. That is why, unfortunately, the PC caucus does not support Bill 91.

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I will return to these points and dissect the problems that our caucus sees with this flawed piece of legislation later on. But first I think it's really important to provide some context for the debate. It has now been more than 10 years since the former PC government took a very bold step forward to protect our environment by passing the Waste Diversion Act, which was designed to encourage Ontarians to, of course, reduce, reuse and recycle. We took this action not only to increase diversion, but also to help our municipal partners by creating a more stable funding formula for the blue box. Unfortunately, the Liberals then used this act to develop new excessive taxation powers and a massive new bureaucracy.

We all know it was the Liberal government who took this action, and nobody else. Still, that hasn't stopped the now environment minister from making up some silly, silly stories. This year I have in fact heard him and his colleagues repeatedly blame the Waste Diversion Act for the creation of their eco tax problems. We've been told to forget about the Liberal operatives who devised a way to use the act to create three massive tax schemes that cost Ontario consumers more than \$200 million—in fact, that was \$200 million a year. It wasn't their fault, they say; it was the act that made them do it. Of course, any thinking person knows that this argument is in fact beyond ridiculous. That's like a criminal converting a legitimate investment fund into a Ponzi scheme to defraud investors and then saying the fund made them do it. Clearly, the criminal used the fund to create the Ponzi scheme, not the other way around.

This same simple cause-and-effect relationship disproves the Liberals' poorly constructed and juvenile argument about the Waste Diversion Act. Clearly, the Liberals used the act to create their eco tax programs, not the other way around. The act didn't compel the Liberals to take this action. That's because inanimate objects or things do not force people to do anything. Those who claim otherwise are either not well or deliberately trying to avoid accountability. Speaker, I know my honourable colleague is a smart man. He has been here quite some time. So I think it's fair to assume the latter is true. Not only does simple logic prove this fact, but so does the historical context. As we have seen far too often with the Liberals, they actually avoid accountability wherever and whenever possible. That's because accountability to a Liberal is like sunlight to a vampire—I know we're getting close to Halloween, but I had to bring that in there early—in fact, as soon as they're exposed to it, they're destroyed. So they do everything in their power to hide

and subvert the truth, even when everyone knows what the truth is.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** I'd ask the member to withdraw. You can't impute motive.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I'll withdraw.

Speaker, I believe this desperation is a sign of the Liberals' failure to properly manage waste diversion in our province. But here's the really troubling aspect of this pattern of behaviour in government: When a government is willing to do anything to protect and preserve its own power, everything else, including health care for our seniors, education for our young people and support for our economy, comes second. This is a picture of the Liberal government in Ontario today and over the past 10 years, and this is the Liberal government that actually wants you to believe that it has brought forward a serious bill for our consideration. With such ridiculous claims and deliberate misinformation being peddled as truth, further context on the Liberals' eco tax history is needed to actually understand how we got to this point, a point at which we are debating a bill that is claimed to be reform but yet is actually taking us backward.

As we all know, eco taxes in Ontario were created by the godfather of the eco tax himself, Dalton McGuinty. He, along with his Liberal cabinet colleagues, rubber-stamped the idea during a closed-door meeting in 2008. The hope was to appease their leftist base while winning corporate support from large companies looking to monopolize the recycling market in exchange for subsidies to waste haulers and processors, and of course there was a cut in it for the Liberals.

Premier McGuinty and his cabinet, which included the now-Premier and the environment minister today, decided to move ahead with this taxation scheme, knowing that they could collect double HST on each individual eco tax charge paid by the Ontario consumer. For years, the Liberals have been embedding millions of dollars of hidden HST charges into eco taxes which they again tax with HST.

In other words, the Liberals have been forcing Ontarians to pay a tax on a tax that includes, actually, a hidden tax, and the results have been staggering. In fact, the Liberals have secretly collected more than \$100 million over the last five years through this double-taxation scheme. This scheme is just part of their never-ending pursuit to squeeze more money out of the pockets of hard-working Ontarians, all in the name of actually protecting our environment.

Back in 2008, during the era of Al Gore-ism, the Liberals decided to exploit people's legitimate concern for the environment by introducing the province's first eco taxes under the Municipal Hazardous or Special Waste Program, also known as the Orange Drop program. This scheme included eco taxes on everything from a can of paint to a pack of batteries to a new oil filter in your car. After seeing these levies on their receipts, most consumers were surprised, and many were actually downright angry. When they tried to protest, they were simply told at the cash register, "Hey, trust us:



Your money is going toward making the world a better place.”

This was the same argument that was used by the Liberals to sell their carbon tax. Still, many consumers didn't believe what the Liberals were actually saying. As with every Liberal tax scheme, Ontarians knew their money was being funnelled through a labyrinth of bureaucracy before a portion of it was eventually used for the stated purpose of the program. I don't need to remind you of some of those programs; one would suggest that the health tax or health premium is a good example of just that.

Consumers acted again to voice their frustration, but to their dismay, the Liberal minister responsible for consumer protection was actually silent. One of her main roles—her actual main responsibility as a minister—is actually to protect the interests of consumers. What's worse, she let the former environment minister—who I know just left moments ago—spend week after week, month after month and year after year working against consumers by defending eco taxation at all costs. Over and over again, he would tell reporters and the public that eco taxes are just the cost of dealing with waste.

Although most Ontarians hated these taxes, the overall protest was quiet enough to let the Liberals feel confident that they could move ahead with even more eco taxes, so they did. In fact, in 2009, the Liberals introduced a new round of eco taxes, this time for their e-waste program that was established under another Liberal regulation for waste electrical and electronic equipment. With this scheme, the Liberals not only introduced eco taxes on everything from iPods to TVs to computers; they also set up a new unaccountable recycling monopoly called Ontario Electronic Stewardship, or OES. This recycling monopoly, or what the minister would like to call a cartel, derives its powers from regulation 393/04, which was established, in fact, by the Liberals. Under this corporatist system, OES takes money from consumers and does it out to a select group of recycling companies that haul and process the materials.

Last year, I pointed out that this system was on the verge of financial collapse while the program itself had actually achieved little to no results. Instead of trying to balance the books, OES tried to justify its existence by attempting to boost waste diversion through increased subsidies to recycling companies. The scheme was simple: The more free money they got, the more materials they would collect. At no point in time did the Liberals raise any concerns about how these eco taxes were actually affecting consumers; they just continued to sanction OES's activity, though publicly they started to distance themselves, in fact, from the system.

Still, because OES knows the environment minister will approve whatever eco tax increases they ask for, they continue to hike costs for consumers to provide even more lavish subsidies to the recycling industry, no matter where the materials were coming from. In fact, it even has gotten to the point at which recycling companies are actually importing materials from other provinces—true

story. That means Ontario consumers are subsidizing recycling for other jurisdictions.

As a result of receiving what seems to be an endless stream of money, recycling companies have become addicted to OES's free cash. This system couldn't be anything more than an anti-free marketplace. It has stifled competition and limited the ingenuity and creativity of individual companies, so it's not hard to see why it didn't take long at all for costs to skyrocket.

Any guess as to how much eco tax revenue OES collects? I know you won't be able to respond, but I'll tell you. It's \$90 million a year. I think if more Ontario consumers knew that the \$40 they have to pay for an eco tax each time they buy a TV is going to bankrolling a \$90-million organization, they would be outraged. Unfortunately, Bill 91 does nothing to correct the situation and actually continues the Liberals' e-waste program, along with all its anti-free market policies.

I know I have just a few minutes left, but I think it's important to move on to the tire tax program that I know a lot of our agricultural partners in Ontario were extremely disappointed about earlier this year—the tire tax program, which the government created for no other reason than they wanted to help some more of their buddies set up another recycling monopoly. They did this by establishing regulation 84/03, which actually gives Ontario Tire Stewardship the power to impose massive eco taxes on all sorts of tires—of course, only after the minister has signed off on them.

The Liberals went ahead with this unnecessary recycling program a few years ago even though more than 90% of tires were being diverted from landfill under a free market system that worked. The old system was achieving great results for the environment at a low cost to businesses and consumers. Yet in spite of this success, the Liberals thought they would try to improve their tire recycling rate by a couple of percentage points while charging consumers tens of millions of dollars to do so. In fact, since 2009, tire recycling costs have soared as the Liberal bureaucracy has rapidly expanded. Just think that, today, Ontario Tire Stewardship now has a budget of \$70 million, and the redistribution of wealth in the system is even more convoluted and actually involves forcing consumers to subsidize the recycling of off-the-road tires.

I guess I'll end there for now, as I know we have to break for question period, but I'm looking forward to resuming the next opportunity we have to speak to Bill 91.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. The time has passed for this session.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** We are recessed until 10:30.

*The House recessed from 1014 to 1030.*

WEARING OF RIBBONS

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** A point of order, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care on a point of order.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I believe we have unanimous consent that all members be permitted to wear these lovely purple ribbons in recognition of Epilepsy Action Day.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care is seeking unanimous consent to wear the ribbons today for epilepsy awareness. Do we agree? Agreed. Thank you.

It is now time for introduction of guests.

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You're jumping the gun there, but I'll recognize the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Thank you, Speaker. On the same topic, I'm delighted to welcome Rozalyn Werner-Arcé, executive director of Epilepsy Ontario, and Gino Piazza, president, Epilepsy Ontario. I know many members will be learning more today about epilepsy.

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I would like to welcome the Co-operative Housing Federation, Ontario region: Dale Reagan, managing director; Harvey Cooper, someone we all know and love, from government relations; Diane Miles, manager of co-op services; Simone Swail, program manager, special initiatives; and Judy Shaw, program manager, co-op services.

From the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada: Keith Moyer, program manager, communications; Denise McGahan, program manager; Nicole Waldron, president of Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada; and Judith Collins, program manager of the Co-operative Housing Federation of Toronto. They're here for an important vote. Welcome.

**M. Grant Crack:** C'est un grand plaisir pour moi ce matin de présenter deux personnes qui habitent dans ma circonscription de Glengarry-Prescott-Russell. Elles sont des membres des Egg Farmers of Ontario : M. Marcel Leroux et son épouse, Sylvette. Bienvenue à Queen's Park.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I'd like to welcome the grade 5 class from Maurice Cody Junior Public School in my riding of St. Paul's. They'll be joining us shortly.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I would like to welcome three members from the epilepsy group this morning that people are meeting with: Dianne McKenzie, who's the executive director, Epilepsy Durham; Cynthia Milburn, executive director for Epilepsy Halton, Peel and Hamilton; and, finally, Jessica Scheffee, outreach coordinator in Durham. Welcome to Queen's Park and best wishes on your three requests from the Ministry of Health.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm not sure. The member from Eglinton-Lawrence, are you standing for—

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I'm just stretching.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Just stretching. Sorry.

Further introductions?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I am also anticipating the visit from two of my favourite constituents: Lisa Streets and Jack Ballinger. Jack Ballinger is a regional councillor in Durham. They're here to fight for the restoration of the Ontario Ranger program. I'd encourage the minister to listen to it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further introductions?

On behalf of the member from Scarborough Centre, the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, to visit with page Ravicha Ravinthiran, are her mother, Santhy Sangarapillai, and father, Ravi Siva, now in the public gallery. We welcome our guests on behalf of our page.

Today, in the Speaker's gallery, we have with us a group of delegates from across Canada—taking part in the Parliamentary Visitor Services Association conference. We welcome them as they welcome us in all of our Parliaments. We're glad you're here joining us for your conference. Thank you very much for joining us.

*Applause.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** They're the ones who make all of our Legislatures very hospitable and welcoming. So we thank them for the good work that they do, particularly the one here in Ontario, Debi. Thank you very much.

I got brownie points for that, just to let you know.

### MEMBERS' PHOTO

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I would like to issue a gentle reminder to all of our female members that the group photograph will be taken of all currently serving women parliamentarians today. The photo will be taken on the steps—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm going to get through this.

The photo will be taken on the steps outside the legislative chamber, and I would ask those involved to remain behind following question period in order that we can organize the photo without delay. We've spoken to security, and what I'd like to have happen is for the women to please line up inside of the doors just before we go out together as a group, to make it as quick as possible for others to respect their commitments. Also, the media has been notified and are willing to delay scrum for just a few short moments for us to take the pictures, and I'd appreciate your co-operation. Thank you very much.

### SPECIAL REPORT, ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSIONER OF ONTARIO

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Finally, I beg to inform the House I have laid upon the table the 2012 Annual Energy Conservation Progress Report Volume One from the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario,



entitled *Building Momentum: Provincial Policies for Municipal Energy and Carbon Reductions*.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** My question this morning is for the Premier. I'd like to acknowledge a dubious anniversary today that no one outside of the Liberal Party is celebrating. Two years ago today, you as campaign co-chair put in place an expensive Liberal seat-saver program. Of course, I'm talking about the cancellation of the Mississauga power plant; it's the anniversary today. Let's call it the crowning achievement in a career of Liberal self-interest. I'll tell you who is not celebrating today: It's the Ontarians who've seen their taxes and their hydro rates skyrocket because they simply did not care what it cost to win those seats.

We've learned, Premier, that you've spent \$275 million to cancel the Mississauga power plant. Would you take this opportunity to tell Ontarians what it cost to cancel the Oakville power plant?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I am answer the question, but before I do that, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all of the women from the Legislature who attended the Habitat for Humanity build yesterday, the Women Build. And I want to congratulate the member for Huron-Bruce for winning the hammering contest. Awesome.

**Interjection:** Now the leader.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Yes, and she's in the leader's chair today. You win a hammer contest, look what happens. There you go.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to recognize that the issue the member opposite raises is one that we all agreed on. Every party in the Legislature agreed that the siting of those gas plants was not what it should have been. In fact, Thursday is the two-year anniversary of the Leader of the Opposition's promise to move those gas plants. We implemented the promise that all of the parties in the Legislature had put in place.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I know you don't want to talk about your cancellation of Mississauga, but we also know that you have been given a draft copy of the Auditor General's findings on Oakville. Will you tell us what it cost to cancel the plant, or will you continue in a long line of Liberal operatives who have dodged, deleted and destroyed documents?

While you're at it, will you please tell us when the overdue documents will be turned over? These are the ones your team was to turn over to our committee last September 12. Your energy minister, his deputy, the IESO and the OPA have all failed to turn over their documents on September 12. Premier, your operatives are all risking contempt. You say one thing but you do

the other. Will you order those documents to be turned over to our committee today?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the government House leader may have something that he wants to say on this, but I will just say first of all that we do not have a copy of the Auditor General's report. No matter how many times the member opposite suggests that we do, we do not have a copy of it. When we do, obviously, it will be available.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** The draft.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I do not have the draft report. I do not have the report. I have seen neither. That's in answer to that part of the question.

On the other issue, I just want to outline what has been provided: 135,000 documents have been provided to answer the questions that have been asked; 95 hours of testimony—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you, Premier. Final supplementary.

1040

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Let's recap where we are: On this second anniversary of your cancelling the Mississauga gas plant, you've spent at least \$585 million of Ontario taxpayer and ratepayer money, and we're not done yet. You won't tell us the cost of the Oakville cancellation, even though you already know it, and you won't turn over the documents that were due two weeks ago. Furthermore, you won't expand the mandate of the justice committee to allow us to talk about influencing the Speaker's office.

Your buzzwords are not—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. I caution the member and I ask again—a reminder to all members: We do not comment on an already-ruled-upon issue. Thank you.

Reword that question.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Premier, your buzzwords are not “open” and “transparent”; they're “clam up” and “cover up.” You're not fooling anyone, Premier. We want answers on Oakville—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member will withdraw.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I withdraw, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Carry on.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** We want answers on Oakville, we want an expanded mandate and we want our documents now.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I came into this office, Mr. Speaker. I said that we were going to open up the process and we were going to provide answers to the questions that were being asked and that we were going to provide the documentation. That is what we've done. As I said, 135,000 documents have been provided; 95 hours of testimony; 55 witnesses, and that goes on and counting; 32 motions. There has been a lot of work done to determine exactly what the issues were surrounding the relocation of the gas plants.

I asked for the Auditor General to look at both the Mississauga and the Oakville plants. I thought it was important that both plants, both situations, be looked at, so that's why we are getting a report on the Oakville plant. We do not have that report yet, so I do not know the deliberations or the conclusions of the Auditor General. Our process in this has been to provide the answers to the questions that have been asked, and that's what we've been doing.

### POWER PLANTS

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is for the Premier. Premier, it's been two years since the McGuinty-Wynne Liberals cancelled the Mississauga gas plant in the middle of the 2011 election and nine years since the local community made the government aware of its opposition. It took months of obstruction from your House leader before a committee was finally able to look into the scandal, and since then you've taken every opportunity to undermine its work.

You've sworn repeatedly that all the documents have been turned over. But here we go again: Another deadline passed two weeks ago and we're still waiting for 20,000 pages of documents.

Premier, are you ready to admit that you really don't want the truth to come out and that you're hoping that if you stall this long enough, it'll just go away?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The opposition just came off a policy weekend and there's a lot of bluster, criticism. Their job is to oppose, but it's also their job to provide policies. They issued a white paper a number of months ago dealing with privatizing Ontario Power Generation and the nuclear fleet.

What that liberal newspaper the Toronto Sun had to say was, "Hudak should keep in mind the last Tory government in Ontario that tried to do that with electricity generation, promising it would lead to lower ... rates.

"Instead, it led to the exact opposite—rates skyrocketed amid rampant Tory patronage and the Conservatives"—*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. As a reminder to everyone, when I stand, your mikes get turned off and the time stops.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Comments while I'm trying to speak are not helpful at all, including trying to shout down the member from trying to answer. I would ask everyone to have that same dignity that everyone deserves when asking a question and when answering a question.

I will remind you again, when the questions get put I'm still hearing noise from the side that's putting the question, and when somebody is answering, I'm hearing heckling from the side that's putting the answer. It's not conducive to this place.

Please finish. You have a wrap-up.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Thank you.

The liberal newspaper the Toronto Sun said, "Instead, it led to the exact opposite—rates skyrocketed amid rampant Tory patronage and the Conservatives, faced with rising public fury, abandoned the scheme, leaving a financial disaster in their wake."

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Back to the Premier: Sometimes you've got to put your money where your mouth is. It's not enough to say you want the committee to do its work; you also have to direct your Liberal operatives to stop obstructing.

This afternoon, after repeatedly refusing to testify in the lead-up to the by-elections, we will finally be hearing from the Minister of Energy's former issues manager, Mr. Ryan Dunn. When staff at the OPA withheld documents that should have been released, Mr. Dunn was named as having given the order. When we asked witnesses who was responsible for the lowballed and inaccurate cost of cancelling the gas plants, again, Mr. Dunn's name was invoked.

Premier, if a miracle does occur and Mr. Dunn remembers who in the Liberal Party ordered him to obstruct the work of the committee, will that person be fired today?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** We appreciate the fact that they're going to continue to criticize. That's part of their job. It's also part of their job to be clear on their own policy. The leader of the official opposition seems to change his mind daily when it comes to wind contracts.

At the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, he said he would not rip up existing contracts. Yet, just the other week at the International Plowing Match he seemed to flip-flop and announce an end to wind. I don't know if this is a flip-flop or part of Mr. Hudak's hidden agenda. What does he mean? Is he going to cancel existing contracts? Yes or no? You guys have to be accountable for your policies—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Well, the minister certainly is an expert on wind because that's what we're getting from over there.

Premier, by refusing to hold Liberal partisans to account for their actions, you're daring the public to hold you accountable for your inaction. Mr. Dunn has been named by no less than five other witnesses as being a key player in the Liberal Party strategy to withhold documents and obstruct the work of the committee.

If he comes before committee this afternoon and claims not to know anything and that sworn testimony by other witnesses has been false, you will be sending a strong message about your kind of leadership: Under a Kathleen Wynne government, Liberal partisans can destroy documents, ignore members' privilege and mislead the public, and all they—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm concerned with the way in which it's being used. You can say



something on the side that tries to—and say the same thing. So I'm going to ask the member to withdraw. I'm also going to ask the member to refrain from using personal names, as I will remind the government-side members to refrain from using names. We always refer to members either by their title or by their riding.

The member will finish his question, please.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I withdraw.

All they get as they make their way out the door is a pat on the head to thank them for a job well done. Premier, before you became Premier you stood for something more than that. What—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order, please.

Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Again, they are really tremendous critics. We hear them day in and day out. But they're coming off a policy conference; they needed to clarify some things there, and they haven't done so. You know, the Leader of the Opposition came out with a new policy several weeks ago to support industrial energy rates in the province of Ontario. He said he was going to fund that by cancelling renewable energy and remove that from the grid. Well, we did some calculations and the calculations show that the 4% of renewable energy that's in the grid—there's no way it can support any industrial program.

Once again, their numbers just don't add up. You analyze their whole platform, and none of their numbers will add up. It's time they came clean on their policy. We know they're good critics. Now, they can't stand for anything that's clear, concise or adds up.

1050

## AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. Last spring, New Democrats pushed hard to make life more affordable and provide relief for drivers facing the highest auto insurance rates in Canada. Is the Premier still committed to delivering results for drivers?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Yes, and I've made that clear in a number of instances when the leader of the third party has asked me that question. I have made it clear that reducing auto rates was something that was very much on my radar before I came into this office. We've made a commitment to reduce auto insurance premiums. That's our target. We are working with the industry to get the costs out of the industry so that those average costs of auto insurance premiums can go down. That's our commitment.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Two years ago, Ontario's Auditor General noted that part of the formula used to set rates was badly out of date and ensured insurance companies a profit margin that was hard to justify. The Liberal government promised a cut of 25% to insurance companies' return on equity. Did that happen?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** The leader of the third party is talking about the ROE reduction that was incorporated, but it's not the measure that's going to make the difference here. Really what makes a difference is us getting at the anti-fraud task force recommendations. It's working closely with a very competitive insurance industry in the province of Ontario, which, I may say, has now come forward initiating reductions publicly on insurance rates. Both The Co-operators and the CAA have made reference to that. We have encouraged the public to shop at various other insurance providers who have now come forward with reductions. The industry has noted that, even prior to us coming forward with our policy and initiatives to reduce rates, they did decline by 0.4%, even prior to us making those calls.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** While the Minister of Finance loudly promised a major reduction in the House last spring, when the time came for action the Liberals quietly backtracked in the dead of summer. The Liberal government promised to take a stand for drivers, and in the end they didn't keep that promise. Does the Premier think that that's delivering results?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** We have been working on reducing auto insurance rates for a number of years. We are the ones who actually initiated the anti-fraud task force. We are the ones who introduced legislation in 2004 to reduce insurance rates, which, by the way, neither party had been able to achieve during the time that they were in power. We will continue to do what's necessary and work with the opposition, as well as all others in our province, to get those rates down. I'm pleased to say that the actions we have taken are now proving to show results.

## AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Back to the Premier with my question: In hearings last week, New Democrats pressed for details on this issue, and government bureaucrats admitted that this broken promise would create a barrier to lowering rates and getting the 15% reduction that the Liberals promised but drivers aren't seeing. Does the Premier agree?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** No, I don't agree, because we made a commitment in our budget that we would work with the sector to reduce auto insurance, and that is what we're doing. As the Minister of Finance has said, we established the anti-fraud task force. We're implementing the recommendations. We need to get those costs out of the system in order for the average auto insurance rates to go down.

Rates are not increasing, on average. In fact, on average, rates are going down. That has already happened. Reductions for individual drivers will be different depending on a number of factors, including their driving record.

I think the members of the third party know that even the 15% reduction is an average reduction across all the drivers in the province. That reduction is spread across the province. We are working to make sure that we hit those targets, and a 15% reduction is the target that we're aiming for.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Drivers were promised relief, but it seems like when the government should be putting the plan into overdrive, they're shifting into reverse instead.

Christine from Mississauga tells us this: "I received my insurance renewal [this summer] and it has not gone down; it has gone up—by \$60 per month!

"I've had to take a second part-time job just to afford a car, and now with this latest, even higher increase, I really don't know how I will be able to keep my car."

After backtracking on yet another commitment to drivers, what does the Premier have to say to people like Christine?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Let's be clear: Members within the NDP have actually written on this issue and cited the following, "We cannot truthfully say they've broken a promise," in reference to what we are doing here in the government.

I've already stated very clearly that as a result of the initiatives that we've taken, rates have been going down. In fact, rates went down by 0.3% even prior to us making the call.

While the member may want to talk about individual issues, we are talking about the industry average. We are citing and noting that both Co-operators and CAA already made a pledge to bring it down. We are providing new licences for medical clinics, and fines are already being levied. We have provided new powers to FSCO so that we can enforce and ensure that those savings are transferred to the public.

The public has means and ways to go to make those complaints official so that we can make certain that they're all being protected.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, I have no hesitation in standing in my place right now and saying the government broke their promise on reducing the return on equity that they said they would reduce for the profits of insurance companies. Drivers were promised that the government would take the tough steps needed to bring down rates. Instead, the Liberals did break that promise. Drivers were told the government would heed the advice of the auditor. Instead, the Liberals ignored that advice. Drivers were promised that rates would go down. Instead, many drivers with clean records are seeing their rates climb drastically.

Does the Premier think that this is delivering results?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Achieving reduction in premiums is giving results. Achieving reductions in their claims costs is enabling those premiums to go down.

The member is making reference to ROE at a benchmark of 11% or 12%. The fact of the matter is, those insurance companies are receiving much less, at about 3%. So that's not the issue.

There is a hotline. For an individual who feels that they're being discriminated against or caused to receive harm, there's a hotline that they can call to ensure that they get the best value and the best results.

But, Mr. Speaker, for the member opposite to suggest that we haven't maintained or kept to our promise—the facts are, we are delivering on those results. We have initiated the changes, we've provided more powers to FSCO, and we are acting on the very initiatives to champion and protect consumers.

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Rob Leone:** My question is for the Premier. We know that your government is fond of having conversations when they suit you, but you ignore conversations when they don't. For example, the House is well aware that your government didn't care about conversations when it came to siting power plants in communities that didn't want them in Oakville in Mississauga. But when it comes to email conversations between backroom political operatives about how to spin the power plant scandal and intimidate members of this Legislature, there are conversations aplenty.

When the Premier was called to the justice committee earlier this year, she said she wanted to be open and accountable for all conversations. But now, in the position to act, she prefers to not have these conversations with the committee to find out about this intimidation.

This has been dragging on for months, Premier. Can you tell this House right now that you will expand the scope of the justice committee to investigate these kinds of intimidation?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, we've addressed this several times in the House, and I think your ruling has been clear.

But I couldn't help but listen to the opposition earlier talk about anniversaries. Today, actually, is the anniversary of a press release put out by Geoff Janoscik, Saturday, September 24. This is what it says: "The only way to guarantee this power plant does not get built is to elect a Tim Hudak Ontario PC government. A Tim Hudak government will cancel this plant."

In a few days from now, we're going to have another anniversary: of the famous YouTube video where we got to see the Leader of the Opposition stand up and say that if he was elected Premier, it would be the end of that plant. It would be "done, done, done."

1100

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Rob Leone:** While the Premier loves a good conversation, the government House leader is a man of few words. I find it passing strange that while the Pre-



mier ducks behind the hedges, she sends her House leader out to take the fire.

On September 18, our House leader called for unanimous consent to expand the scope of the justice committee, and the government House leader said no. On September 19, the member for Whitby–Oshawa called for unanimous consent to have conversations about developmental services, and the government House leader said no. And just yesterday, the member from Timmins–James Bay called for unanimous consent to expand the scope of the justice committee again, and the government House leader said no. He sat there, while we asked for conversations, surrounded by dozens of Liberals, and said no, no, no. The people of Kitchener Centre deserve better than a Dr. No.

Premier, will you look to your left, walk eight feet over to your House leader, and have a conversation about accountability in your government?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Let's talk about—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I will look to each individual members now. I would also ask the government side not to do the same.

Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Let's talk about accountability on the other side of the House here. April 16: four opposition candidates invited to testify at the justice committee, including PC candidates Geoff Janoscik, Zoran Churchin—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Leeds–Grenville, come to order.

**Hon. John Milloy:** They all declined.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Stormont, come to order.

**Hon. John Milloy:** April 30: Tim Hudak is asked to testify; he declines. Backup witnesses Janoscik and Churchin also decline.

We then invite PC candidate Mary Anne DeMonte-Whelan. She accepts and is scheduled to testify, then surprisingly calls back a few hours later to cancel.

May 2: Janoscik, Churchin and DeMonte-Whelan are called to testify. Janoscik tells the Clerk to “stop calling,” and the other two do not respond.

May 7: Tim Hudak is once again invited to testify; he declines—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** My question is to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure. Yesterday we all had to endure the sight of politicians from all three levels of government fighting to claim political credit for a subway extension in Scarborough. The people of Scarborough aren't interested in which rooster can crow the loudest. They just want good public transportation. I

don't blame them for thinking that all three levels of government laid an egg on this issue, but Scarborough residents deserve results, not a freshly hatched transit plan every morning.

Does the minister really think this is the best way to plan transit for the people of Scarborough?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Next week, the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Infrastructure, the growth secretariat and Metrolinx will release some of the most detailed data and metrics on ridership impact, job creation and evaluation of routes. The iCorridor tools that have been developed by the ministry are arguably the best in North America. This government will let the evidence speak for itself on ridership, access, job creation, affordability and impact.

I think once people see the evidence—it was interesting that when I read the TTC report, there wasn't even a ridership projection. We're not a government that wants to build subways that are going to be running empty, or the inappropriate technology. We'll get value for tax dollars and we'll choose the options that meet the needs.

Mr. Speaker, this isn't about a politician; it isn't about a game; it's about not waiting—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Everybody's making announcements, but announcements alone will not get the shovel in the ground. To get this done we will need sustained and steady leadership.

When will the minister stop freelancing, stop the chaos, stop drawing lines and dots on a map, and focus on getting transit built for Scarborough?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I have one question: When will the member from Trinity–Spadina's party read the map and realized it hasn't changed? I've never pulled out a pencil or a crayon or changed a dot or an “i” on a map. It's the same map.

The members from Scarborough–Guildwood all the way to Don Valley West will tell you that the line is the same. Other governments have changed lines and have not written cheques. This government is committed to two things: not changing the lines on the map and writing cheques. We are the only government investing in a significant way—\$50 billion in the Big Move, 15 projects across the GTA; 19% of that is funded by the government of Ontario and has been the policy of the Liberal Party of this province.

## AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** My question today is for the Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment. It's regarding Ontario's auto sector, which is a vital part of our economy both across the province of Ontario and locally in my constituency of Oakville, where the Ford plant is located. I know the auto sector is an important part of the economy, a significant employer in the province of Ontario and it's an integral part of Oakville's local economy.

It's important that we continue to create and retain jobs across the province, and we need to ensure that we're supporting key sectors like the auto industry. These are very competitive times globally. Ontario has proven that it can compete on a global stage, and we remain one of the top auto producers in all of North America.

With last week's announcement in my riding, many of my constituents are asking what this announcement actually means for the local economy. Will the minister please update the House on what our government's recent announcement at the Ford plant means in Ontario and to the auto sector in this province as a whole?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Thanks to the member from Oakville for this great question. He joined the Premier and I last week for this announcement. It's an exciting time for Ford Canada, as the member mentioned.

Our government, as did the federal government, made a \$70.9-million investment to support Ford's overall investment of more than \$700 million in this province. This investment will secure 2,300 high-quality jobs at the Oakville plant, as well as the many thousands of spin-off jobs in the supply chain leading into that production and help Ford, quite frankly, build one of Ford's nine global platforms in Oakville. This will position the facility to be among one of the top-tiered platforms for Ford in the entire world. It's great news for our auto sector, as Ontario produces right now more vehicles than any other jurisdiction in North America. In fact, we're on track for a record sales year this year.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thanks to the minister for that update.

Auto workers in Oakville and across the province should continue to see the strong commitment our government has and continues to make in the auto sector, but there's still some concerns from my constituents about overall growth in the auto sector. We know Ontario as a province has fared far better than many other jurisdictions in North America. Our economy is back on track, having recovered all of the jobs that were lost during the global economic downturn and much more. But despite investments like this, having a good job to wake up to and to go to every day is what's going to keep this province strong in the long run.

Speaker, through you to the Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment, what is our government doing to support the continued growth by helping to create good, meaningful jobs in Ontario's auto sector?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I want to commend, first of all, the hard-working employees at the Ford plant and in the auto sector right across this province—and Unifor was there as well. This is a great example of a partnership between both levels of government, the private sector and our labour friends.

The sector is responding very, very well. In fact, since the bottom of the recession, we've added more than 13,000 new jobs directly to the auto sector in this province. Of course, in St. Catharines recently, General

Motors announced that they were adding 50 new full-time employees at the St. Catharines plant. These are full-time positions, as I mentioned, at the Powertrain facility there. They are being filled under the terms of the local agreement with their Unifor partners.

There are also a number of other investments through the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund, Armo Tool, North American Stamping Group and Linamar who produce the parts and materials that are sold through these auto manufacturers and are keeping our province strong and thriving.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** My question is for the Premier. Before I ask the question, though, I would like to just clarify one matter: The mistake with the gas plants wasn't taking them down; it was building them in the first place, and only your government did it.

Well, Premier, here we are on another beautiful day. You've had all night to think about it. Perhaps you've even been able to have a conversation with the minister from Winnipeg—oh, sorry.

1110

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. One time is one too many. The next time I hear it, I'm going to move on to the next question. The member will withdraw and then use the proper title.

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will withdraw that.

At any rate, what I would like to know is whether you're now in a position to join with the federal government, the city of Toronto, the TTC, the residents of Scarborough and Tim Hudak, support the transit plan passed by Toronto council and get on with the job.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know the Minister of Transportation will want to speak to the supplementary, but just let me reiterate what I said yesterday, which is: I am very pleased that our government has been investing in transit since we came into office. I'm very pleased that we have put \$16.4 billion into transit. I'm very pleased that there are lines being built at this moment across the GTHA and I'm very pleased that our \$1.4 billion for the Scarborough line has leveraged the engagement of the federal government.

Now it's up to the city to decide what it is going to do, but our \$1.4 billion stays on the table. We will build subway in Scarborough, and I'm very pleased that the opposition has come to the party this late in the game.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** Premier, the score is still 64-0, and I'm asking now for the third time, will you please tell me when you plan to open a subway station? Maybe you can't tell me the exact day or month, but could you please at least tell us the year?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** It's interesting that it took six months, and yesterday, we had a first discussion between



a federal and provincial transportation minister in Ottawa—which went very well.

I think now, having six months of being nice got us nothing. Turning up the heat got us more press releases and more time with federal ministers. I said that from now on, we should be able to keep that conversation chilled so that we can actually get work done, which is finally happening after six months.

The second thing: We are building more subway stations, digging more tunnels than at any time in the modern history of Ontario. We will shortly, within the next few years, have a better record than the party opposite.

The problem is that almost all the members over there weren't part of that era of subway-building; they were famous for the era of subway closing, cancellation and fill-it-in.

We can measure now—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

### ENERGY CONSERVATION

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question to the Minister of Energy: Today, Ontario's Environmental Commissioner stated that when it comes to energy conservation, "there has not been much provincial policy activity ... to talk about."

One glaring government failure on energy conservation is its commitment of hundreds of millions of dollars to refurbish the Darlington nuclear power plant before it has even considered the energy conservation alternatives.

Why is the government putting expensive nuclear power expansion before cheaper energy efficiency?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The critic from the third party will know that we have issued a conservation paper as part of the long-term energy plan review called Conservation First, and it is going to revolutionize conservation in the province of Ontario. There will be a policy in place, when it's adopted, which says that if it can be done cheaper by conservation, then that will happen before we do generation. It's responsible, it's revolutionary and it's going to make a significant difference—and, coincidentally, we have done some significant conservation already under the old policy from the 2010 plan; and that is 1,900 megawatts we've conserved since 2006. That's like taking 600,000 homes off the grid.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** It's an interesting answer.

Today, the Environmental Commissioner was clear that it's cheaper to conserve energy than to build new power plants. The government knows this. The minister knows this. In the summer, it released a discussion paper he mentioned, entitled Conservation First, but even as it consults on this paper, it's allowing Ontario Power Generation to spend hundreds of millions of dollars on nuclear expansion projects. Why is the government undermining its conservation-first policy by proceeding with this nuclear refurbishment?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** This government supports nuclear energy. I know the opposition party supports nuclear energy. Today, over 53% of generation is from nuclear. It has served this province well. It is going to continue to serve us well in the future.

We have willing hosts in this community for nuclear power. It's a tremendous boost to the economy. Nuclear energy is clean, it's renewable, it's cheap, it does the job and, above all, as I mentioned yesterday, nuclear energy is extremely safe. We have the best, safest power plants in the world, and we are going to continue to use them.

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. For most Ontarians, their homes are their sanctuary, providing a sense of comfort and security, but for women who are victims of domestic violence, their homes can be a prison that they are often afraid to leave. When they make a decision about whether they should take their children and leave this often dangerous and potentially life-threatening situation, the decision becomes even more difficult, especially when they have no place to go and no one to turn to.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister, I, and I'm sure this whole House, would like to know what the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has done to help out these women and families in their time of need.

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I thank the member for asking this important question. Our government believes in providing safe and affordable housing for all those in need. Yesterday afternoon, we actually had a chance to put that belief into practice in a practical way when the Premier, the minister responsible for women's issues and the member for Etobicoke Centre—I know she was there at 6:30 in the morning—building a house for Habitat for Humanity. We were there to participate with many members in the House on Women Build day to provide housing for six families with access to affordable housing, and housing that they will own.

We believe that having a place to call home is the first step in realizing new opportunities and a first step to a better quality of life. Our special priority policy requires service managers to place victims of domestic violence into safe, affordable housing as quickly as possible, potentially saving the lives of those vulnerable women.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** I would like to thank the minister for that answer. Habitat for Humanity built some homes for new Canadians in my riding of York South-Weston a few years ago; I participated in that build, and it was a great experience.

Our government's protection of vulnerable women and families is very important, and I'm sure the minister will agree that all Ontarians need safe and affordable housing. When a senior, a young adult or a family is unsure of where they will go to spend a night, they are more likely to fall through the cracks and not receive the services that they need.

I understand that earlier this year the federal government had announced that they would continue their cost-sharing with our government for another four years. Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister, could she explain what work has been done with the federal government to ensure that all levels of government continue to work together and invest in Ontario's most needy?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I am very grateful to the member for asking this question because I believe we have a shared obligation, a moral imperative as legislators to stay at the table and work to deliver affordable housing to Ontarians in need. The reality is that a healthy housing market serves all Ontarians and makes our province stronger. Our government has been working with our federal partners to begin the investment in affordable housing program, which is a 50-50 cost-sharing agreement that will guarantee over \$480 million of new funding over four years.

Though our government welcomes the recent announcement of the federal government to extend its commitment to affordable housing, the fact remains that the federal government's contribution to social housing will evaporate unless they continue and decide to return to the table. I continue to ask and urge parties opposite to stand with our government to ask the federal government to commit to stable and predictable funding for all of our housing providers over the long term.

1120

#### CHILD PROTECTION

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Minister, in January, we learned that hundreds of key recommendations to prevent the deaths of children in custody were ignored by government agencies. Now we are left wondering if children continue to be in danger because ministry-approved policies and procedures are not being followed.

On May 27 and August 16 of this year, as part of a three-year performance review, your ministry issued 12 directives to Chatham-Kent Children's Services. Among them, all CKCS child protection workers were ordered to review the province's child protection standards, and all CKCS supervisors were ordered to receive clinical supervision training from an approved trainer within 90 days. That was May 27, 120 days ago. How many of those employees have completed their training?

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** With respect to CAS accountability and CAS directives that have been issued, our ministry is working very closely with that particular CAS and has been working closely with that staff and with that director to ensure that our mandate, our objective of ensuring that all children are kept safe, is maintained. That is our goal, and it is what we will continue to do across the province with all our CASs.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** Minister, I'm not sure why you put a 90-day deadline and it's now 120, but anyway, you have said that young people in the child welfare system

are your priority. Your government talks about the right care at the right place at the right time, but you've given the public reason to question these claims. I have to ask: Isn't it better to train child welfare employees before a crisis occurs rather than after?

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** Thank you again. Further to that, Speaker, again, we are continuing to work with that particular CAS. Of course our staff are trained when they're out at our agencies, working with our children across the province.

We will act on anything that comes forward, and we did act in that situation in terms of doing a review and determining what recommendations and directives needed to come forward. We will continue to do that for our communities, our neighbourhoods and our families to ensure our children are kept safe, and that is absolutely our goal at that CAS and at CASs across the province.

#### HOSPITAL SERVICES

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. I think the Premier would agree that nobody wants to be in the hospital and that, when we're sick, our ability to eat fresh, healthy and carefully prepared food in the hospital can do wonders for patient morale and for recovery. The patients at Scarborough Hospital have been benefiting from an innovative and much-lauded program that brings fresh Ontario food into hospital rooms. All that is about to go out the window with the forced merger of Scarborough Hospital and the Rouge Valley Health System. Does the Premier believe that this innovative program deserves to become another budgetary casualty?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care is going to want to comment in the supplementary on this particular issue, but I want to make a general comment, wearing my Minister of Agriculture and Food hat, because I think that the Local Food Act is the framework within which we want to promote exactly what the leader of the third party is talking about, so that public institutions, wherever they are, would be looking to local Ontario food for that fresh nutrition that we know is so good for people.

I don't know the specifics of this particular contract situation, but what I do know is that the Local Food Act is the mechanism whereby we want to promote exactly what the leader of the third party is talking about.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Once again, the Premier is good at conversations and talking but not very good at actually getting things achieved.

This government brags about transforming health care and bringing local food to Ontarians, but instead of supporting Scarborough Hospital for transforming patient menus with healthy meals made with ingredients grown in our own backyards, the health minister is working at cross-purposes. She is sitting on her hands and letting the Central East LHIN focus on damage control rather than on patient care. Now, this is actually a chance for the Premier to walk the walk and not just talk the talk. Will the



Premier stop the plug from being pulled on this valuable local food-based nutrition program?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** My understanding is that there is no final merger at this point, that it's a discussion that's happening, so we need to let that roll out. One of the reasons that the transformations that are happening within the structure of LHINs are working is because they are local decisions, and so we need to let that happen.

What I want to reinforce is that the local food bill will support and promote exactly the kind of initiative that the leader of the third party is talking about. I made an announcement a few days ago about the \$30-million Local Food Fund that is going to allow institutions and businesses and groups to promote local food and find ways of making sure that people get more local food on their plates. We are completely supportive of what the leader of the third party is talking about. We want local food to be available in institutions, and if the bill is passed, which I hope it will be, then we will be able to operate within that framework and promote great Ontario local food.

#### SPORTS AND RECREATION FUNDING

**Ms. Mitzie Hunter:** My question is to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. During this summer in our Scarborough community, my colleague the member for Scarborough Southwest and I were visited by the minister, where he toured the West Scarborough Neighbourhood Community Centre, a community organization providing valuable community services to children, youth, families and seniors. We had a wonderful time playing basketball with some young people that day.

Our government understands the importance of a healthy, active lifestyle and thus strives to integrate physical activity, recreation and sport in our lives and in the lives of our children. We also understand the importance of providing opportunities to allow people to engage in community, sport, recreation and physical activity. Speaker, through you to the minister, can he please explain what our government is doing to ensure that all Ontarians have access to sport and recreation opportunities?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I want to thank the member from Scarborough–Guildwood for the question. Yes, I did go to west Scarborough for that basketball game with the kids. Unfortunately, I did not score one basket.

I'm delighted to share that our government has made it a priority to increase opportunities for participation in sport and recreation activities for people of all ages and all abilities. This is why in January 2013 my ministry launched the Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund program, in order to encourage lifelong physical activity and, as a result, enhance community engagement. The funding allocation for this year's program is over \$7 million. The fund is a short-term, cost-sharing program available for projects that address community need and promote physical activity.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Mitzie Hunter:** Thank you, Minister, for that response. It is always great to hear about how our government is improving the quality of life and creating better opportunities for Ontarians.

Building a foundation of lifelong physical activity for a healthier lifestyle is important to our government. This fund will definitely be beneficial to the provincial organizations that apply for the funding. However, the local sport and recreation organizations are important as well. The people in my community of Scarborough–Guildwood want to know what this funding program will do for them. Speaker, through you to the minister, what is the government doing to ensure that small local organizations have access to this fund?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Thank you again for the question. I'm pleased to say that this fund, the Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund, supports over 130 provincial, regional and local projects all across the province, including group walks for seniors, aquatic fitness, and skating, just to name a few. Local service boards and municipalities can also apply for funding to support local projects over a period of one or two years. This fund addresses small local organizations, and in fact the West Scarborough Neighbourhood Community Centre will receive support through the Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund program.

Speaker, supporting local community programs that are accessible to everyone and assist people in staying active is part of the Ontario government's efforts to help families lead healthy lifestyles.

1130

#### CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** My question this morning is to the Premier. As you know, your government has managed to pass just one piece of legislation since February. Last week, you met with our leader, Tim Hudak—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I would ask all of us to come to order and allow the question to be put.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** We tried to help you yesterday.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Also, the member from Leeds–Grenville is speaking while I'm speaking.

I would ask that the question be put without interruption and the answer be put without interruption.

Please.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Premier, last week, you met with our leader to seek support in passing nine of your hand-picked bills. One bill that was not included was Bill 69, the Prompt Payment Act, a bill that has broad support from all three parties in this House because it is vitally important for Ontario's small and medium-sized construction firms. The Prompt Payment Act is also supported by stakeholders such as the Council of Ontario Construction Associations and the Ontario Road Builders' Association.

Premier, if you do the work, you should get paid. Do you believe this, or is there some other reason you didn't include Bill 69 on your personal wish list?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I believe that the piece of legislation that the member opposite is talking about is the member for Vaughan's bill. Let me just say this, Mr. Speaker: I'm very pleased the PCs, the opposition, have agreed that there are some pieces of legislation where there is enough common agreement that we can move ahead and move those through the Legislature.

The reason that I asked for the meeting with the Leader of the Opposition and the leader of the third party was just that: to say that I think there are some pieces of legislation where we've got all-party agreement or we've got enough agreement that we can move them ahead. I'm very pleased that the opposition has agreed with that, that we're going to be working together. The House leaders are working together. I'm pleased that the Legislature is working as it should in a minority Parliament.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I was just going to recognize the member for a supplementary, but there were people on his own side who were preventing me from understanding that you would hear me when I said, "Supplementary." As soon as the answer gets started, we hear the same thing. I'm asking the member to put his supplementary question without interruption, and I'm asking for the answer to be heard without interruption.

Please.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Thank you, Speaker.

Premier, that kind of answer simply won't cut it. The construction industry employs over 400,000 men and women, approximately 6.5% of Ontario's total workforce. Many of these people are in small and medium-sized firms. Prompt payment legislation already exists in the majority of US states, the UK, Ireland, the EU, Australia and New Zealand.

Premier, over 50% of your caucus was hand-picked by you to join your ever-expanding cabinet, and I'm willing to bet your cabinet colleagues always receive their payment promptly and on time. With all three parties supporting prompt payment legislation, is it because the MPP from Vaughan is not one of your cabinet insiders that you haven't bothered to move forward with his Bill 69, or do you simply not believe in the principles of prompt payment?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** As much as it might be fun and frivolous and filled with jocularly, it's still an interruption to the House.

I also want to remind the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke that you can actually make a disruption in the House without even saying anything. I don't want to have to dig up the video. You know what I'm talking about.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The list of bills that the Leader of the Opposition and I talked about and that the leader of the third party and I talked about were some initial bills that I thought there was enough common ground on that we could get some movement. But there are lots of other pieces of legislation where I think that we can work together.

Obviously, the member opposite has identified another piece of legislation. I'm sure the member for Vaughan is very happy to have the support. I think there are obviously more areas of common interest, so I look forward to getting the pieces that we've identified and then moving on to other pieces of legislation. In fact, we're suggesting a couple of other pieces: the employer health tax exemption and the Waste Reduction Act. Those are areas where I think we can find agreement as well.

There's lots of work to be done. I look forward to working with the opposition on it.

## TOURISM

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** To the Minister of Natural Resources: Minister, yesterday the Ontario government unveiled a fall-colours campaign encouraging people to travel Ontario. But in my riding alone, seven parks have already closed for the season, and that does not include the northern parks that were permanently shut down by this government last year, without any notice or consultation.

What's worse is that all 10 of the suggested routes in your tourism guide are in southern Ontario. The guide also encourages people to stop in at their travel information centres, although this government has already shut those down, too.

Minister, did you even consider northerners when this fall-colours campaign was put together?

**Hon. David Orazietti:** As a northerner, certainly we consider the priorities and interests of northerners on this side of the House. With respect to the parks, it's very, very clear that our commitment to managing the 334 parks in the province of Ontario is an incredibly important priority to our government.

The member opposite is well aware that in last year's budget, with respect to the fiscal challenges that we're facing in the ministry and the transformation efforts that were being made, a number of parks were converted to non-operational status. It didn't mean they were closed; it meant that there would not be staff present, and individuals could still explore those parks and have that opportunity.

In the recent year, we've been able to develop partnerships with four communities to reopen and create the operational status again at four of those parks, which we are certainly very pleased with. There are ongoing efforts to continue to work with communities to reopen parks or to create the operational status designation, and I look forward to working with the member.



**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** Minister, earlier this year, the MNR closed seven parks across the north permanently. I agree that northern parks are beautiful and that they should be enjoyed, but this government has locked the gates. It shut down travel information centres across the northwest and replaced them with an app that doesn't have our content and doesn't work in the north. We have "Travel Manitoba" signs dotting our highways, and now it unveils its tourism strategy in black and white: "Travel Southern Ontario."

Minister, is this what your government means when it tells us, "Trust us. We have a solid tourism strategy for northern Ontario"?

**Hon. David Orzietti:** I hear the bluster from the member opposite. The reality is that the government is committed to ensuring that we provide positive experiences and opportunities for everyone across this province, whether it's in northern Ontario or southern Ontario.

As the member is well aware, there was a decision made last year with respect to the operational status of our provincial parks. I'm very pleased with the partnerships that we have been able to deliver on. The parks in the province operate at 82% cost recovery. We are still not recovering the level of funds that go into the investment that we make in Ontario parks. We're continuing to make our parks more accessible with our online registration for camping and other opportunities in our parks. We're continuing to look for new ways to support our parks and programs like Learn to Camp at Ontario Parks, and Learn to Fish.

So I certainly hear the member opposite's concerns. We are concerned around these issues as well in ensuring that Ontarians have a great experience in our parks.

### FIREFIGHTING

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. I'm aware that your ministry announced in July of this year that you were rebuilding the fire attack base in Armstrong, north of Thunder Bay, a major capital investment from your ministry into northern Ontario. Armstrong is a small community, and I'm pleased that this investment was made by your ministry and by our government. Not only will this investment—and it's interesting that we have this question now, just following on the heels of the last question—from your ministry be an essential safety measure in enhancing northwestern Ontario's firefighting capabilities; it will also secure local jobs in the community.

Speaker, could the Minister of Natural Resources please explain for the members of the House how this major investment from this ministry to the forest firefighting base in northern Ontario will improve firefighting capabilities in our region?

**Hon. David Orzietti:** I want to thank the member from Thunder Bay—Atikokan for this important question. He's certainly correct: We've made a very significant capital investment in three fire bases across the province,

one of which is in the member's area. Armstrong is in dire need of being upgraded, as a number of their buildings are more than 50 years old. These buildings will be demolished and new ones will be built.

The upgrade in Armstrong is one of three important investments that the ministry is making. Specifically, we're investing \$47 million into enhancing firefighting capabilities in three communities. We're also investing in Sudbury, at the airport—the facility is need of upgrade there as well—and in Haliburton, at the Haliburton/Stanhope Municipal Airport. At the centre of it, these investments are not only about bricks and mortar, but about investing in people and ensuring that these courageous men and women have the resources and tools they need to do this important and dangerous job.

### CONSIDERATION OF BILL 95

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I want to quickly advise the House that the motion passed on June 5, 2013, with respect to the legislation establishing the Financial Accountability Officer, Bill 95, has an anomaly with respect to the timing of the Legislative Assembly committee to report the bill after it completes clause-by-clause consideration.

In the absence of any other instruction from the House to do otherwise, it will make sense for the committee simply to follow what would normally happen in any committee on any bill; that is, that the committee report the bill at the first available opportunity following completion of clause-by-clause.

Therefore, the committee will report the bill tomorrow afternoon during routine proceedings, if it has finished clause-by-clause consideration at that time. If not, the bill will instead be reported on Thursday afternoon during routine proceedings.

The timing is relevant because the reporting of the bill triggers an immediate two-hour debate on third reading of the bill. I hope that's clear.

### DEFERRED VOTES

#### NON-PROFIT HOUSING CO-OPERATIVES STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2013 LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LES COOPÉRATIVES DE LOGEMENT SANS BUT LUCRATIF

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 14, An Act to amend the Co-operative Corporations Act and the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of non-profit housing co-operatives and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 14, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les sociétés coopératives et la

Loi de 2006 sur la location à usage d'habitation en ce qui concerne les coopératives de logement sans but lucratif et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We have a deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 14, An Act to amend the Co-operative Corporations Act and the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of non-profit housing co-operatives and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1143 to 1148.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Members take their seats, please.

On September 23, Mr. Naqvi moved third reading of—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You're overpowering me, and you don't even have a mike.

On September 23, Mr. Naqvi moved third reading of Bill 14.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Hardeman, Ernie	Munro, Julia
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Harris, Michael	Murray, Glen R.
Arnott, Ted	Hatfield, Percy	Naqvi, Yasir
Bailey, Robert	Holyday, Douglas C.	Natyshak, Taras
Balkissoon, Bas	Horwath, Andrea	Nicholls, Rick
Barrett, Toby	Hoskins, Eric	O'Toole, John
Bartolucci, Rick	Hunter, Mitzie	Oraziotti, David
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jackson, Rod	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Bisson, Gilles	Jaczek, Helena	Pettapiece, Randy
Bradley, James J.	Jeffrey, Linda	Piruzza, Teresa
Campbell, Sarah	Jones, Sylvia	Prue, Michael
Cansfield, Donna H.	Klees, Frank	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chan, Michael	Kwinter, Monte	Sandals, Liz
Chiarelli, Bob	Leal, Jeff	Sattler, Peggy
Chudleigh, Ted	Leone, Rob	Schein, Jonah
Clark, Steve	MacCharles, Tracy	Scott, Laurie
Colle, Mike	MacLaren, Jack	Sergio, Mario
Coteau, Michael	Mangat, Amrit	Shurman, Peter
Crack, Grant	Mantha, Michael	Singh, Jagmeet
Damerla, Dipika	Marchese, Rosario	Sousa, Charles
Dei Duca, Steven	Matthews, Deborah	Smith, Todd
Delaney, Bob	Mauro, Bill	Sousa, Charles
Dhillon, Vic	McDonnell, Jim	Tabuns, Peter
Dickson, Joe	McKenna, Jane	Taylor, Monique
DiNovo, Cheri	McMeekin, Ted	Thompson, Lisa M.
Elliott, Christine	McNaughton, Monte	Thomson, John
Fedeli, Victor	McNeely, Phil	Walker, Bill
Fife, Catherine	Meilleur, Madeleine	Wilson, Jim
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Miller, Norm	Wong, Soo
Forster, Cindy	Miller, Paul	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Fraser, John	Milligan, Rob E.	Yakabuski, John
Gerretsen, John	Milloy, John	Yurek, Jeff
Gravelle, Michael	Moridi, Reza	Zimmer, David

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 98; the nays are 0.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

*Third reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Kitchener—Conestoga on a point of order.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I just want to remind members of the BlackBerry Experience reception today at 5:30 p.m. in room 230. I encourage you to sign up online and attend later this afternoon. Thank you, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's not a point of order, but I wish to see everybody there.

#### DECORUM IN CHAMBER

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke on a point of order.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Earlier today, during question period—and I want to make it very clear, Mr. Speaker, that I would never be challenging a ruling of the Speaker, but I do ask for your consideration of a clarification on this point.

During question period, I recognized the government, which we have had previously in this House as a standard practice, saying “the McGuinty government,” “the Harris government,” “the Mike Harris government,” “the Bill Davis government,” “the Dalton McGuinty government.”

In questioning, I only said, “under a Kathleen Wynne government,” and you ruled that I could not use the member's name. I was not referring to the member's name in any particular way other than to identify the government. It has been the practice of this House to allow that. Otherwise, we are going to have a very difficult time in debates, going forward, even being able to recognize governments of the past or to be able to designate them as being the ones responsible for any particular action.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I do accept the member's premise that it is clarification and that it does not challenge the Speaker. I accept that. I am also going to endeavour to seek counsel from the table.

I am concerned, and I want to use this as a quick moment to explain to the member. I'm a little bit on a crusade to have us all refer to members' titles and to their ridings. I will take your point of order into consideration, and I believe we may be able to come to an agreement on how that's going to proceed. But I want to use this as a moment to reflect on what we have been doing, and maybe we can probably put some of that to rest.

I do accept what the member is saying as a clarification. I will seek counsel and report back to the member sharply. But I do caution him that I'm looking for changes in how we are doing things, and it might even include that, but I don't want to make that prejudgment until I seek counsel from the table.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I appreciate that, Speaker. Thank you.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There are no further votes.

This House stands recessed until 3 p.m.

A reminder to the members of the female persuasion to meet us at the front door.

*The House recessed from 1155 to 1500.*



## NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member from Kenora–Rainy River has given notice of her dissatisfaction with the answer to her question given by the Minister of Natural Resources concerning Ontario’s fall-colours campaign guide. This matter will be debated today at 6 p.m.

## RESIGNATION OF MEMBER FOR NIAGARA FALLS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that a vacancy has occurred in the membership of the House by reason of the resignation of Kim Craiton as the member for the electoral district of Niagara Falls, effective September 24, 2013.

Accordingly, I have issued my warrant to the Chief Electoral Officer for the issue of a writ for a by-election.

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I believe they should be here momentarily, but I would like to welcome members from Epilepsy Ontario who are here today, specifically Rozalyn Werner-Arcé, Gino Piazza, Dianne McKenzie, Jessica Scheffee and members from other local agencies around the province.

I would just like to remind all members that there is a reception to be held in the legislative dining room from 5 to 7 this evening. I urge all members to attend.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I just quickly welcome folks from BlackBerry who are setting up in room 230 for their BlackBerry Experience reception tonight at 5:30. I encourage all members to join us in that. I’ll be speaking to that again shortly. Welcome to Queen’s Park. Thanks for coming today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The same reminder of the reminder I got this morning?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** It is.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Okay, so that’s a reminder of the reminder you gave.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** We’ll be reminded again.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We’ll be reminded again.

## MEMBERS’ STATEMENTS

### ONTARIO RANGER PROGRAM

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I rise in this House today to speak to an issue that has truly a passionate following. The decision in the fall of 2012 to end the Ontario Ranger Program that has been going strong for 70 years has been sorely felt. In the time since this decision, I have had several opportunities to meet with individuals who have experienced the Ontario Ranger Program first-hand. I

share their concerns that a true wilderness experience, sadly, will not be realized by the scaled-back Stewardship Youth program that has replaced it.

I attended pre-budget hearings in Thunder Bay last year, where former Junior Rangers spoke passionately about how profoundly the program affected their life. In many cases, their experience affected their choice of education and work.

We heard that shutting down this program would save \$1.6 million. Somehow this does not seem like a lot of money when you consider the benefits the program has brought and the huge amounts of money the government wastes in other ways. What is the saying? Penny-wise, pound foolish. I think it applies in this case.

I’m proud to say that at the end of August, my riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka hosted an event where past rangers were able to come together to celebrate the program and emphasize the loss of the ending of the program. I can tell from my own personal experience that the work of the Ontario rangers in maintaining trails and portages in Ontario’s parks has been greatly appreciated.

I have been happy to table petitions in the Legislature in the past, and I would like to raise awareness about the changes felt at the ending of the Ontario Ranger Program.

### PRECARIOUS EMPLOYMENT

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** This Thursday evening, I’m hosting a discussion at my community office on St. Clair Avenue with Dr. Susana Miranda to share her research about the struggles of Portuguese-Canadian workers in the 1970s and 1980s. Dr. Miranda is a member of the Portuguese Canadian History Project. It’s an organization committed to preserving, democratizing and disseminating the history of immigrants in Canada, particularly those of Portuguese descent. Dr. Miranda’s research sheds important light on the experience of Portuguese-Canadian cleaners in Toronto, but it’s a story all too common to other new immigrant groups working in precarious jobs.

Speaker, in fact, more and more people in Ontario are working in precarious situations, with over 50% of people in the GTA without stable full-time jobs or benefits. This new reality for urban workers is hurting people and their families in this province, and it’s something that we need to work together to address to make sure that we need to work together to address to make sure that work pays and that people can afford to live in our city.

I invite people to join me, Dr. Miranda and MP Andrew Cash for this important discussion at our community office on St. Clair Avenue this Thursday, September 26 at 6:30 p.m.

### GLENGARRY PIPE BAND

**Mr. Grant Crack:** I’m pleased to rise today to celebrate and acknowledge a great accomplishment of an important cultural group in my riding of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell. The Glengarry Pipe Band placed an

incredible sixth at the World Pipe Band Championships in Glasgow, Scotland this past summer.

Based in Maxville, Ontario, home of the world-famous Glengarry Highland Games and the North American Pipe Band Championships, the Glengarry Pipe Band regularly competes in Canada, the US and overseas, and also performs at local charitable events, community functions and parades.

The World Pipe Band Championships is a yearly pipe band competition currently held in Glasgow, Scotland. The event has been operating regularly since 1930, when the Scottish pipe band association was formed. For competitive bands, the title of world champion is highly coveted. This event is seen as a culmination of a year's worth of preparation, rehearsal and practice.

On August 17 of this year, under the leadership of pipe major Ross Davison, the Glengarry Pipe Band finished sixth out of 28 bands registered in the 4A category. The Glengarry Pipe Band and an American band were the only North American entrants.

The road to Glasgow, Scotland was something that the pipe band had been working up to for the past two years. The band did a lot of fundraising, which included concerts, parades and spaghetti suppers.

The band has played for the Irish association of Ottawa and also at various Ontario competitions, including Toronto, Kingston, Kemptville, Georgetown, Cambridge and, of course, in Maxville, my home municipality, at the Glengarry Highland Games.

I'm proud of all of the members of the Glengarry Pipe Band, many of whom hail from my riding of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, and I wish them all success in the future.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

### BLACKBERRY

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Members' statements? For a reminder of a reminder of a reminder, the member from Kitchener–Conestoga.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** That's correct. I will hope to definitely see you there tonight, Speaker. I hope to welcome every other member of the Legislative Assembly and their staff to experience the new BlackBerry Q10 and Z10 models at their tips and tricks event in room 230 here at Queen's Park.

For more than a decade, MPPs have relied on this smart phone to send secure emails, search the Web for important news and issues of the day, send instant BlackBerry messages to staff and colleagues, or use the map feature to navigate through new towns and cities across this province. They've been a valued part of our daily business life.

Now, with their next generation of smart phones, BlackBerry has added many new features to serve our personal lives, too. With the ability to operate apps like Skype, Twitter, BBM Video and—my personal favourite—TuneIn radio, as well as several other entertainment features, we are able to keep in touch with our family and

friends while being on the go from Queen's Park to events in our ridings.

On top of the multiple services this phone has to offer, BlackBerry has done so much for our community and our province over the years, injecting billions of dollars into our economy, creating thousands of local jobs and establishing a culture of ingenuity and innovation throughout the Waterloo region.

Saying that, I look forward to joining you all tonight with the folks from BlackBerry for a great evening, to experience their new smart phone and take the opportunity to ask them any questions or give comments that you may have.

Thanks, Speaker. I look forward to seeing everyone, including yourself, here tonight.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. My tolerance is minimal when it comes to props, member from Durham.

### LEGAL AID

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Today I rise to discuss the importance of legal aid. In a society based on the rule of law, access to justice is often linked to your access to legal representation. In a society without legal aid, people with wealth have greater access to legal representation and, consequently, greater access to justice.

The size of your bank account should not determine your access to justice. Marginalized, vulnerable people should have access to high-quality legal representation, and that is why legal aid is so important in our society. From the certificate system, which gives people facing financial barriers access to high-quality lawyers, ranging from family law or immigration and refugee law to criminal law and civil law as well, to the legal aid clinics which provide essential legal aid services to their local communities, to staff duty counsel lawyers, these are all fundamental aspects of a free and just society.

In fact, duty counsel lawyers represent the first line of defence for many people facing criminal charges. These duty counsel lawyers, employed directly by Legal Aid Ontario, deserve to be treated fairly and enjoy the same rights as other public sector lawyers, including the right to collectively bargain.

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I call on all members of this House to recognize the importance of legal aid and to uphold the principle that socio-economic status must remain irrelevant to an individual's ability to obtain high-quality and professional legal representation.

### HATE CRIMES

**Mr. Vic Dhillon:** I stand with great sadness today to speak of an incident that is of great significance to the constituents of my riding of Brampton West.

This past weekend, a respected Columbia University professor, Dr. Prabhjot Singh, was attacked while



walking. The attackers shouted anti-Muslim sentiments and started punching him. This is a very disturbing incident. This type of hatred has no place in our society. Dr. Singh was attacked simply because he was a Sikh wearing a turban and had a beard.

I represent a diverse riding of people of different faiths, backgrounds and cultures. When something like this occurs anywhere in the world, we feel it in our community.

It was not too long ago that the Wisconsin tragedy took place in a gurdwara where several Sikhs were senselessly gunned down.

Here at home, the Khalsa school in Brampton was vandalized with hateful graffiti. It was very sad to see, to say the least.

Speaker, Ontarians want to be reassured of their safety in their communities. They want to feel free to express their faith and worship without fear.

That is why I was pleased to stand in the Legislature last week to support my colleague Monte Kwinter in his motion which affirmed our commitment to protecting religious freedoms.

From time to time, racism and hatred will raise their ugly heads, as they did for Dr. Singh, but we always need to stand together as we did last week.

No matter what symbols you wear or where you live, no matter what your gender, orientation or ability, whether you are Sikh, Muslim or Jewish, we all have the right to feel safe and secure. There is only one Ontario.

#### UNIVERSITY OF ONTARIO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Mr. Speaker, on September 4, Durham region celebrated the 10th anniversary of Ontario's newest university, UOIT, the University of Ontario Institute of Technology.

Here are just a few of the highlights from the past decade:

- the launching of the master's program in 2005;
- the Ontario Power Generation engineering building opened in 2008;
- also in 2008, UOIT was named one of the top 50 research universities in Canada by Research Infosource Inc.;
- the first PhD graduates in 2011;
- the opening of the General Motors of Canada ACE centre, which is the Automotive Centre of Excellence, in 2011.

Today, UOIT has 8,400 undergraduate and graduate students.

UOIT has a unique focus on student-centred learning, along with a market-driven research mandate focused on areas of national and provincial significance.

I'd like to pay specific tribute to the founding president, Dr. Gary Polonsky, a constituent; the UOIT partners; the faculty, staff, students and alumni who have contributed to the success of the university on a day-to-day basis.

Congratulations to the UOIT president, Tim McTiernan, and Dr. Larry Seeley, chair of the board of governors.

It has been a real privilege to support UOIT as it grew from the dream of families and communities to the vibrant research and academic centre it is today.

I'm confident that UOIT will enjoy continued success and contribute to the economy of Ontario under a Tim Hudak government.

#### ERINOAKKIDS

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I had the pleasure of announcing the future site of ErinoakKids in Oakville last Friday.

ErinoakKids has been providing services to children with a range of physical and/or developmental challenges, communication disorders and autism for the past 42 years and has grown to servicing now over 13,500 children and their families.

Bridget Fewtrell and the rest of the team at ErinoakKids have worked tirelessly at making a patchwork of leased commercial spaces work for the children in the past.

My constituents always provide positive feedback about the quality service they receive at ErinoakKids and the positive impact that that has on their lives.

On Friday, Bob McKay, a former client and ErinoakKids board member, delivered an inspirational speech about the support they provided that allowed him to become a PhD candidate in international relations.

Karissa Campbell and her mother, Andrea Schindhelm, spoke about what the new facility will mean for them.

The project is the largest redevelopment project in the history of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. The site will be in close proximity to Oakville's new state-of-the-art hospital. It will be green, modern and built to LEED silver standards to ensure that it is a sustainable building.

My sincere congratulations to everyone who has been working diligently on the ErinoakKids redevelopment project. It's going to be a welcome addition to the Oakville community.

#### AMAZING BED RACE

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** Sundays are often the one day of the week when you look forward to staying in bed, but also a day when you feel the need to get things done. The people of my riding had no problem balancing the two on Sunday as the fourth annual Amazing Bed Race took to the streets of Burlington to do some good.

This energetic and fun-filled annual event is organized by the Joseph Brant Hospital Foundation and the Rotary Club of Burlington North. The purpose is simple: to raise money by racing beds on wheels along a 100-metre course. It's a great fundraiser event and a fantastic com-

munity builder as teams rally around a common cause, cheered on by their neighbours.

Going into its fourth year, the event raised over \$270,000. The total is now roughly \$360,000.

I was in London this weekend, but our Burlington PC riding association team—the “Blue Jane Group”—was there. The team—my daughter Courtney was piloting, powered by speedy runners Marc, Mike, Amr, Stewart and Curtis—beat our 2012 showing, finishing third. Whoo-hoo! We came fifth last year.

Congratulations to the 2013 champions, Acura on Brant, and to all who took part.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You’ve given Hansard a challenge; there’s no question about it.

Thank you to all of you for your statements.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

**Mr. Grant Crack:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on General Government and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum):** Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 30, An Act to regulate the selling and marketing of tanning services and ultraviolet light treatments / *Projet de loi 30, Loi visant à réglementer la vente et la commercialisation de services de bronzage et de traitements par rayonnement ultraviolet*,

The title of which is amended to read:

Bill 30, An Act to regulate the selling and marketing of tanning services and ultraviolet light treatments for tanning / *Projet de loi 30, Loi visant à réglementer la vente et la commercialisation de services de bronzage et de traitements par rayonnement ultraviolet à des fins de bronzage*.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

*Report adopted.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received a report on intended appointments dated September 24, 2013, of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies. Pursuant to standing order 108(f)(9), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

*Report deemed adopted.*

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 VISANT À SOUTENIR LES PETITES ENTREPRISES

Mr. Sousa moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 105, An Act to amend the Employer Health Tax Act / *Projet de loi 105, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'impôt-santé des employeurs*.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, I'll make my statement during ministerial statements.

### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

#### TAXATION

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I am pleased to rise today to introduce the Supporting Small Businesses Act, 2013. This bill is an important part of our government's plan to build a strong and prosperous economy, to create jobs and continue to reduce the deficit. The reforms we're proposing today are part of our government's ongoing work to make Ontario the most attractive place to do business in North America. It's the latest in a series of steps we've taken to grow the economy.

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It would, if passed, deliver on key commitments from our 2013 budget to reduce taxes for small businesses, because we know that small businesses are a thriving and a driving force of growth in Ontario, and we know that tax cuts for these small businesses would mean more opportunities for hiring and less time and money spent on paperwork. In addition to helping small businesses, this change will also apply to charities and not-for-profit organizations.

We understand that our responsibility as government is to put in place the right conditions for our businesses to create jobs and invest right here in Ontario and the right environment for people to succeed, and that's why this bill is so significant. It would, if passed, better target the employer health tax exemption to help small businesses, charities and not-for-profits cut costs, reduce paperwork and boost hiring. It would increase this tax exemption to \$450,000 for small, private sector employers. The cost of this tax break would be paid for by eliminating the same exemption altogether for large private sector employers with annual Ontario payrolls of over \$5 million. This change would mean that more than 60,000 employers would see a tax cut, and it would mean that more than



12,000 more employers would no longer pay this tax at all. Employers that are no longer required to pay this tax will also save the cost of filing an EHT return. That's why I urge all members of the House to support this important bill.

We have taken significant steps to make Ontario's business tax system more competitive and help grow the economy. We introduced a harmonized sales tax which will result in the removal of about \$4.6 billion a year in taxes paid by businesses. We've cut corporate taxes for large and small businesses alike, providing more than \$1.8 billion of tax relief per year, and we've eliminated the capital tax to provide for more than \$2.1 billion to support our businesses in creating jobs.

Those are just some of the ways that we're improving Ontario's competitive advantage. Of course, we remain focused on balancing the budget by 2017-18. In fact, this month, we released the province's public accounts, which show that Ontario's 2012-13 deficit is now down to \$9.2 billion. That's \$5.6 billion lower than projected in the 2012 budget.

The bill I'm introducing today is part of our job creation plan. It's a bill which would cut taxes for small businesses, charities and not-for-profits. It will reduce the cost of hiring for more than 60,000 job creators, and it would cut down the paperwork burden of small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, and all members of this House, this is in keeping with our plans to grow the economy through a competitive business climate by reducing the tax and paper burden to small businesses across the province. More importantly, it will help create and promote more jobs in Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It's now time for responses.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to address the government's employer health tax legislation introduced here this afternoon.

I'd like to first point out that it was our government, a PC government, that first introduced the employer health tax exemption as a way to assist small businesses in this province by reducing their overall tax burden, but what we've seen since that was done was the amount of tax the businesses are paying increase exponentially.

For me and my caucus, as we have received word about this bill that was introduced today, this legislation exemplifies exactly everything that's wrong with this government and their approach to governing here in Ontario over the last 10 years. They're unwilling to go far enough. What we have here from the Minister of Finance is nothing but an optical illusion. It's a shell game, where money is being moved around to try and make it appear as if they're actually creating jobs in the economy. They're unwilling to go far enough to take the decisive action that's needed to provide real tax relief for businesses in Ontario. It's more tinkering around the edges by this government, and it's not going to do anything to solve the jobs crisis in Ontario and get the nearly

600,000 men and women who woke up this morning in Ontario without a job back to work.

The Liberals have done this time and time again, though: their willingness to speak out of both sides of their mouth when it comes to providing real help for small business people in the province.

We need to put this legislation into context with the overall framework that this government has laid out, which is actually driving jobs and businesses and investment out of Ontario, fleeing for more friendly places to do business, and those are the simple facts. This legislation comes at a time when we're struggling with skyrocketing hydro costs, increases to WSIB premiums—that's the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board—that's the Trades tax that has been introduced, restrictions on the skilled trades through outdated apprenticeship ratios, and that forest of red tape that we talk about all the time, the over-regulation that's occurring in this province. There's no question we're the most over-regulated jurisdiction in all of North America.

But first let's look at the energy rates, because it's now the second anniversary of the cancellation of the Mississauga power plant. Ontario's industrial electricity rates are now the second highest in North America. The global adjustment charge, which is simply this government's catch-all for the misdeeds and mistakes that they've made on the energy file, including the power plant cancellations, hit a record high this past month. Last year, energy rates surpassed taxes as the number one concern for Ontario businesses for the first time ever. I'm not sure you heard that, but taxes are no longer the biggest concern; it's electricity rates, and your government is not doing anything about that.

This legislation alone also won't do anything to reverse the damage done through the increase in WSIB premiums forced upon small businesses, nor is it going to reverse the College of Trades tax, which is targeting independent contractors in Ontario. It's severely hampering their ability to hire and create jobs. For some, it's actually killing their opportunity to stay in business at all.

Back home in the Quinte area, we're fortunate to have small businesses of just about every variety. We've got retail and software development; we've got wineries and manufacturing and real estate and insurance companies. Names like Huff, Mackay, McDougall and Alexiou: They're all small businesses, and these are businesses that have been hit by this government with eco fees and the HST. They've seen their red tape burden balloon to more than 380,000 regulations.

What needs to be stressed is that the economic problems facing our small businesses are much bigger than the effect simply of the EHT, the employer health tax. The culture of hydro rate increases, fee increases and all of the other increases on our businesses, and the red tape as well that has been foisted on our small business people, has done considerable damage to small and medium-sized businesses across the province. We've lost some great family small businesses in my riding, and others are on the edge of closing their doors.

Only the PC caucus has a real plan to put people back to work in Ontario, to restore economic growth and bring us back to our rightful place as the economic engine of Confederation. Only we have a plan to free businesses from the tax and regulatory burden that this government has placed upon them so that they can invest and actually create jobs in Ontario.

This legislation is more proof that this government simply isn't capable of taking the decisive action needed to get our province turned around and headed in the right direction.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Before I start the clock for the next response, I do want to advise the member that I caught something and I didn't respond quickly to it, but he did use a phrase that has been ruled in the past as saying something on the side that you couldn't say in a forward way. So I'm going to ask him to review Hansard and take a look at that wording, and if he needs to talk to me, I'll do that. I would want to not necessarily consider this a total admonishment, but basically—we'll talk after. It's not to be used again.

It is now time for responses.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Love the tie.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** You love this tie. I wore this for RIM and for BlackBerry.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** There you go.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Okay.

Mr. Speaker, it's a delight for me to stand up and to give a response to the Supporting Small Businesses Act, which has just been introduced here today.

I'm always happy, and we in the NDP are always happy, when the government likes to adopt some of the recommendations that we have made. I think everybody needs to know—although the minister didn't talk about this—that this was part of the many demands that the NDP put forward during that period of time when we were prorogued and getting ready to come back for the budget preparation. It was one of the things the NDP suggested as a way of actually helping the treasury to get some money. We're a little disappointed that it has been spun a little and is not going to really make money for the coffers, because heaven knows we need that—we're running a \$9.2-billion deficit—but in fact, this is what has happened.

1530

It was part of our overall effort to try to show this government where monies might be available without having to tax ordinary people. We had a three-part plan, and the plan was very simple. The first one was to restrict the HST input tax credits, which would have saved this government some \$1.3 billion. We continue to talk about that in the Legislature every week—at least somebody raises this point and asks this question. If you ended those HST input tax credits, which allow people to write off the costs of entertainment, food, transportation, vehicles, gas and electricity payments—which ordinary people can't do—you would save the government some \$1.3 billion.

Secondly, we talked about the increase of the corporate tax compliance, which, if undertaken, would have saved the government between \$50 million this year and \$200 million going down the road two years. What that would have involved is that companies located in Ontario could not pay taxes in cheaper jurisdictions like other provinces or offshore from Canada. We think that that's something that should have been explored. It would have saved a lot of money.

The third one was, of course, the employer health tax credit, which, if instituted as the NDP said, would have actually saved the government some \$90 million. Instead, what is being introduced here today is almost revenue-neutral. That means that it is going to cost the government some money.

The bill does, in fact, part of what the NDP would like to do if we were sitting on that side, because we think that in order to balance a budget, you can't do entirely what the Conservatives are saying: slashing goods and services. You have to also look at where the revenues might be made available. Part of those revenues might have been available, had the government wholly bought what the NDP was trying to say in terms of the \$90 million, in making sure that large companies were no longer able to claim the \$400,000 but, in fact, that small companies continued to do so.

Now, in this bill, the government has seen fit to remove small employers from the tax, and we agree with that. I don't really have a great deal of difficulty upping that amount of money from \$400,000 to \$450,000. It's not a great deal, and it's not going to be the end of the world in doing so, and 12,000 employers are going to be helped. We hope that this helps small business, because we believe in small business, in the NDP. We believe that they are the backbone of the economy. Certainly, it is the area in which most of the growth has taken place in the past and will likely take place in the future.

The bill is designed to make sure that the money is paid on the backs of those who are most able to afford it; that is, the large corporations, the banks, the insurance companies, the people who don't need the \$400,000 exemption in the first place.

The government has said that in passing this bill, if it is passed, it will be almost revenue-neutral—not quite. It will end up costing us a little bit of money. But then the minister went on to talk today about all the other things the government is doing. I'd just like to remind him, in making these announcements again and again, of how much you are giving away to business. You can see in your own speech that \$4 billion is not in the treasury. If you ever wonder why there is a \$9.2-billion deficit, you have to start looking at your other actions.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.



## PETITIONS

### HOME WARRANTY PROGRAM

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It says:

"Whereas new homeowners and home builders across Ontario have expressed significant dissatisfaction with the Taron Warranty Corp.; and

"Whereas this government monopoly needs to be held accountable for the repeated failing reported by both new homebuyers and home builders...;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Minister of Consumer Services as follows:

"That the minister request the Auditor General do a value-for-money audit of Taron."

I agree with this petition and will affix my name to it and give it to page Megan.

### TAXATION

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I have a petition that reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the cost of living in northwestern Ontario is significantly higher than other regions of the province due to the high cost of necessities such as hydro, home heating fuel, gasoline and auto insurance; and

"Whereas an increase in the price of any of these essential goods will make it even more difficult for people living in northwestern Ontario to pay their bills and put food on the table;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To reject any proposed increase to the harmonized sales tax, gas tax or any other fees or taxes in the northwest; and instead investigate other means such as increasing corporate tax compliance or eliminating corporate tax loopholes in order to fund transit in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area."

I fully support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Gabrielle to deliver to the table.

### FAMILY CAREGIVER LEAVE

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the people of Ontario deserve to be able to look after their sick or injured family members without fearing that they will lose their jobs at such a vulnerable time;

"Whereas the people of Ontario deserve to be able to spend time looking for a child that has disappeared, or take time off to grieve the death of a child that was murdered without fearing that they will lose their jobs;

"Whereas the federal government has recently extended similar leaves and economic supports to federal employees;

"Whereas the government of Ontario, and the Premier of Ontario, support Ontario families and wish to foster mental and physical well-being by allowing those closest to sick or injured family members the time to provide support free of work-related concerns;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario pass and enact, during spring of 2013, Bill 21, the Leaves to Help Families Act."

I fully support the petition, Madam Speaker, and give my petition to Jasper.

### ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Steve Clark:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the government of Ontario's newly created Ontario College of Trades is planning to hit hard-working tradespeople with membership fees that, if the college has its way, will add up to \$84 million a year; and

"Whereas the Ontario College of Trades has no clear benefit and no accountability as tradespeople already pay for licences and countless other fees to government; and

"Whereas Ontario has struggled for years to attract people to skilled trades and the planned tax grab will kill jobs, and drive people out of trades;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To stop the job-killing trades tax and shut down the Ontario College of Trades immediately."

I'm pleased to affix my signature, and I'll send it to the table.

### HYDRO RATES

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas home heating and electricity are essential utilities for northern families;

"Whereas the government has a duty and an obligation to ensure that essential goods and services are affordable for all families living in the north and across the province;

"Whereas government policy such as the Green Energy Act, the harmonized sales tax, cancellation of gas plants in Oakville and Mississauga have caused the price of electricity to artificially increase to the point it is no longer affordable for families or small business;

"Whereas electricity generated and used in northwestern Ontario is among the cleanest and cheapest to produce in Canada, yet has been inflated" unnecessarily "by government policy;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To take immediate steps to reduce the price of electricity in the northwest and ensure that residents and businesses have access to energy that properly reflects the price of local generation."

I wholeheartedly support this, will sign my name and give this to page James to deliver to the table.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Mr. John O'Toole:** A petition from my riding of Durham reads as follows:

"Whereas Hydro One Networks Inc. (Hydro One) is proposing construction of a new transformer station on a 100-acre site in Clarington, near the Oshawa-Clarington boundary;

"Whereas the site is on the Oak Ridges moraine/greenbelt;

"Whereas concerns have been raised about the environmental impacts of this development, including harm to wildlife as well as contamination of ponds, streams, and the underground water supply;

"Whereas sites zoned for industrial and/or commercial use are the best locations for large electricity transformer stations;

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"Whereas most, if not all, residents do not agree this project is needed and that, if proven to be necessary, it could be best accommodated at alternative locations such as Cherrywood or Wesleyville;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, ask that the Ontario Legislature support the preservation of the Oak Ridges moraine, the greenbelt, and the natural environment at this site. We also ask that the Ontario Legislature require the Clarington transformer station to be built at an alternative location, zoned for an industrial facility and selected in accordance with the best planning principles."

I'm pleased to sign and support this on behalf of my constituents and present it to Megan, one of the pages here.

## MINING INDUSTRY

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** "Whereas Ontario's mineral wealth belongs to the people of Ontario;

"Whereas the people who collectively own these natural resources should stand to enjoy their benefits;

"Whereas Ontario's Mining Act presently calls for resources mined in Ontario to be processed in Canada, yet allows cabinet to grant exceptions to the clause;

"Whereas these exceptions ensure residents of Ontario are told why our resources are being shipped elsewhere—information that can be used to better plan for infrastructure and job training needs to ensure a more competitive environment;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To amend the Mining Act to ensure that people living in Ontario maximize the benefit of their natural resources."

I support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Bridget to deliver to the table.

## FISHING AND HUNTING REGULATIONS

**Mr. Todd Smith:** "Whereas the McGuinty/Wynne government has drastically reduced the number of Ontario hunting and fishing regulation booklets available to the public; and

"Whereas regulations in printed booklets are the most portable and convenient format for outdoorspersons to consult in the field, while hunting or fishing; and

"Whereas in addition to the Internet being unavailable in remote locations, many Ontarians do not have Internet access, or prefer information in print rather than electronic format; and

"Whereas those who hunt and fish pay substantial amounts each year to purchase outdoor cards, hunting licences and fishing licences and it is reasonable to expect that a booklet explaining the regulations should be provided as a courtesy; and

"Whereas Ontario hunters and anglers need to access the most current regulations to ensure they enjoy hunting and fishing safely and lawfully;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, ask the Ministry of Natural Resources to respect the wishes of Ontario anglers and hunters by providing hunting and fishing regulations in a booklet format to everyone who needs one."

## COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** "Whereas the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre is recognized as one of the leading primary care providers in northwestern Ontario, providing essential services to those living in not only Ignace, but across northwestern Ontario; and

"Whereas a 2010 rent increase by the government of Ontario has threatened the long-term viability of the health centre's operations; and

"Whereas the rent being charged to the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre is much higher than rent being charged to similar operations in other communities and far surpasses 'market rent' for a small community in northwestern Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately rectify the situation and ensure the long-term viability of the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre by either reducing rent, transferring ownership of the building to the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre, or through capital funds to build a new facility that better suits the community's needs."

I fully support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Pratah to deliver to the table.

## HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:



"Whereas the Ministry of Transportation has indicated it will be making improvements to Highway 21 between Port Elgin and Southampton in 2014; and

"Whereas the ministry has not acknowledged the repeated requests from the community and others to undertake safety enhancements to the portion of the highway where it intersects with the Saugeen Rail Trail crossing; and

"Whereas this trail is a vital part of an interconnected active transportation route providing significant recreational and economic benefit to the town of Saugeen Shores, the county of Bruce and beyond;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario to require the MTO to include, as part of the design for the improvements to Highway 21 between Port Elgin and Southampton, measures that will enhance the safety for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists and all others that use the Rail Trail crossing; and to consult and collaborate with the town of Saugeen Shores and other groups in determining cost-effective measures that will maintain the function of the highway while aligning with the active transportation needs of all interested parties who use the Saugeen Rail Trail."

Madam Speaker, I'm receiving hundreds and hundreds of signatures on this petition. I totally agree with it and affix my signature.

### TAXATION

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** This petition is so important, I just want to re-emphasize it.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the cost of living in northwestern Ontario is significantly higher than other regions of the province due to the high cost of necessities such as hydro, home heating fuel, gasoline and auto insurance; and

"Whereas an increase in the price of any of these essential goods will make it even more difficult for people living in northwestern Ontario to pay their bills and put food on the table;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To reject any proposed increase to the harmonized sales tax, gas tax or any other fees or taxes in the northwest; and instead investigate other means such as increasing corporate tax compliance or eliminating corporate tax loopholes in order to fund transit in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area."

I support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Taylor to deliver.

### PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ministry of Health is planning to delist OHIP physiotherapy clinics as of August 1st, 2013, which represents cuts in physiotherapy services to sen-

iors, children and people with disabilities who currently receive care at designated OHIP physiotherapy clinics; and

"Whereas people who are currently eligible for OHIP physiotherapy treatments can receive 100 treatments per year plus an additional 50 treatments annually if medically necessary. The proposed change will reduce the number of allowable treatments to 12 per year; while enhancing geographical access is positive, the actual physiotherapy that any individual receives will be greatly reduced; and

"Whereas the current OHIP physiotherapy providers have been providing seniors, children and people with disabilities with individualized treatments for over 48 years, and these services have been proven to help improve function, mobility, activities of daily living, pain, and falls risk;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To review and reverse the decision to drastically cut OHIP physiotherapy services to our most vulnerable population—seniors, children and people with disabilities; and to maintain the policy that seniors, children and people with disabilities continue to receive up to 100 treatments per year at eligible clinics, with a mechanism to access an additional 50 treatments when medically necessary," with the current low-cost OHIP physiotherapy providers.

### ANIMAL PROTECTION

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the process popularly known as 'declawing' is actually an amputation that is the equivalent of cutting off a human's fingers from the knuckle up;

"Whereas the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association considers 'declawing' to be an unnecessary cosmetic procedure;

"Whereas research has shown that declawing a cat significantly reduces a cat's quality of life and leads to behavioural and health problems;

"Whereas declawing eliminates a cat's ability to defend itself when in danger; and

"Whereas the process is considered to be inhumane and is banned in more than 40 countries;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To ban the unnecessary and inhumane procedure known as 'declawing' in the province of Ontario."

I support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Gabrielle to deliver.

### HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario Slots at Racetracks Program has, for over a decade, provided mutual benefit to the province of Ontario and the horse racing industry; and

"Whereas the government has announced the cancellation of the Slots at Racetracks Program, jeopardizing the future of the horse racing and breeding industry in Ontario at the cost of thousands of jobs and \$2 billion in economic activity;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario work with the horse racing industry to reinstate and improve the Slots at Racetracks Program with its revenue-sharing agreement to sustain and grow the horse racing industry to the benefit of our communities."

It's signed by hundreds of people in my riding, and I'll hand it over to page Sean.

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made in the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business such that Mr. Fraser assumes ballot item number 48 and Mr. Bartolucci assumes ballot item number 81.

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#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS AMENDMENT ACT (LEAVES TO HELP FAMILIES), 2013

##### LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES NORMES D'EMPLOI (CONGÉS POUR AIDER LES FAMILLES)

Resuming the debate adjourned on September 19, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 21, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 in respect of family caregiver, critically ill child care and crime-related child death or disappearance leaves of absence / *Projet de loi 21, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2000 sur les normes d'emploi en ce qui concerne le congé familial pour les aidants naturels, le congé pour soins à un enfant gravement malade et le congé en cas de décès ou de disparition d'un enfant dans des circonstances criminelles.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I'm pleased to rise today to contribute to this debate. While the Employment Standards Amendment Act (Leaves to Help Families) is an interesting bill, we do have to talk about this a little bit more thoroughly, because we would be remiss if we

missed some cornerstones of the ability to facilitate this type of support for families.

Before I go into some of those cornerstones, I want to say that we support the bill for families who are helping family members and need to take leave in order to do so. There is nothing more important than family members, and we are actually glad that the Liberals listened to our concerns last session and have made significant changes and improvements to this bill. However, as I said, there are still a number of things we need to discuss.

Before I go there, I want to talk about some of the things we are seeing. It's good to see that we are giving more respect, in terms of the changes that have been made since this was debated last session. It's good to see that we are giving more respect for family members who unselfishly give their time to the care of a family member. Whether it's taking someone to chemo treatments or being home to provide around-the-clock care, these people deserve our thanks, support and respect. We also need to respect the grieving process and support families who are undergoing tragic situations.

I am sure this will have a lot of support in rural regions, especially where people have to drive more than one hour one way to get to hospitals and care centres in order to ensure that their loved ones have the care they deserve and need. When we talk about aging at home and being at home for a critically ill person, it makes a lot of sense to have family around them at that time, because in many cases, the reality is that there is a lack of long-term-care beds around Ontario.

Another thing we like to see in this bill, for lack of a better phrase, is that the loss or disappearance of a child is finally recognized. There is probably nothing more heartbreaking than the loss of a child, and parents need time to deal with this. Providing them time is not only the compassionate thing to do, but the right thing to do.

I can think of cases, even here in Ontario, where family members were lost to horrific crimes—tragic, unexpected—and we need to have rules in place to enable these people to deal with the situation in the manner they have to, and respect the time needed in that particular instance. The worst thing would be to suffer through a catastrophic loss, only to turn around and lose your job. It doesn't make sense, any way you look at it. So it's very, very important that we do move this bill through.

With that said, there are some buts. We need to do a reality check when we talk about caregivers' leave. In terms of a reality check, do we have the proper cornerstones in place to enable the proper type of leave that is needed and proves to be respectful of employees as they ask to be granted that leave? For instance, some of the cornerstones I thought of in reflecting upon Bill 21 are the whole concepts of aging at home, convalescing at home or passing at home, which is a wish of so many people now. Do we have the proper care in place to support family members?

My point in saying this is that more times than not around my area and riding of Huron-Bruce, I'm hearing



frustration time and again over the fact that front-line services to enable these people to care for their family at home are getting totally lost. As budgets become tighter, the front line seems to be the one area that is always affected over and above the bloated bureaucracy.

Once and for all, we need to have a government in Ontario that is committed to managing costs and recognizing where there are savings to be realized. The PC Party, under the leadership of Tim Hudak, recognizes that we do have a bloated bureaucracy in our health care system and we do need to look at how we can adapt our approach to front-line services. I just feel that that whole concept is void with the current government of the day, and it is disappointing.

We need to be mindful of this cornerstone if we are really going to support our caregivers when they are at home, helping their loved ones.

Another thing we need to discuss is flexibility. Time can't be defined when someone falls ill. You can't regiment it to one week, to two weeks, to even three days. What I feel is missing in this particular bill is flexibility.

I think of someone close to home right now, suffering from pancreatic cancer. Her family came home this spring, and her family came home again in the summer, and they came home this past weekend. They needed flexible time to be with their mother, to help and care for her. Right now, Bill 21 is totally void of that whole concept. We need to do better by these people and recognize that illnesses do not follow exact timelines.

It's my hope that when it gets into second reading and gets debated a little bit further, the flexibility that is needed in Bill 21 is recognized as a void right now and gets built into Bill 21 to make it a much stronger bill, recognizing the realities of caring for somebody at home. I'm confident that all parties will certainly address this flexibility need when it moves into committee.

I need to recognize that this opportunity also creates more consistencies between our provincial and federal legislation.

You know, it's interesting: There are a couple of things I joke around about when we reflect back on prorogation, but one of the good things that came out of prorogation is that there was more time available to strengthen this bill. Again, there's still a little bit of room for improvement. We need to be recognizing that, again, cornerstones as a foundation to support this bill are so, so important.

As I said, people don't get sick in week increments, so why is the legislation set up that way? The eight weeks could be made cumulative, a change that could be made to ensure that if only eight days are needed, those eight days are used, and then they have more time.

As I mentioned in the specific example I just shared with you, they needed time in the spring, they needed time this past summer, and they needed time this past week. So we need to be mindful of the realities when we put the finishing touches on this bill as it moves through committee.

There are other cornerstones that could be addressed as well. Mental health: We need mental health supports for people caring for the ill at home, because the realities are that productivity at work gets stressed; your own immediate family needs and regular routines get stressed. So we need to think about the larger picture and how people get impacted.

Again, I just want to take a step back and revisit the fact that if we are going to take a look at enabling caregivers to help their loved ones at home, we need to make sure they have the proper resources. In terms of jobs and in terms of the economy, we have to make sure that those jobs, the jobs that are needed to enable people to care at home, are there.

What I'm hearing around the countryside is that when budgets get tight, the first things to be cut are front-line services. That is wrong. We need a government in Ontario that recognizes that the bloated bureaucracy in our health care system right now is actually handcuffing the ability of people to care for folks at home. That too needs to be addressed, hopefully, when it gets into committee.

Another thing that needs to be talked about—I just mentioned jobs and the economy. Another discussion that needs to be had in committee is the reality that not everybody has family close to home to care for them. What about a neighbour? Does this caregiver leave absolutely have to restrict the caregivers to family members, or can it be extended to people in the neighbourhood?

When jobs are getting tight, and as the economy in Ontario, Toronto, the greater Toronto area, rural Ontario—the list could go on and on—gets tighter and tighter, the reality is that people are leaving this province to look for jobs. If people truly did choose to be at home to convalesce or to age, caregivers may not be readily at hand. That's another point of flexibility that we need to be considering when we think of Bill 21 when it gets into committee.

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I would just like to revisit the fact that we do support this. Let's get on with it because we have bigger things to approach and discuss, like jobs and the economy.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** Very briefly, Madam Speaker. I was listening carefully to the member from Huron-Bruce, and she really touched me with her story, but I'm a little confused—that's not an abnormal state for me.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Don't open that door, Ted.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** Wait; just let me explain. You're talking about front-line services being cut. I'm not going to go back in history; let's leave that alone. But the opposition is the same party—I won't even use the two minutes—that's talking about freezing everybody's wages and cutting staff. You want front-line services; those front-line services cost money, and we need to be investing in that. You can't have it both ways.

I hear your appeal. I agree with you. I think from a heart perspective, a value perspective, you're right on,

and I'm with you. But I just want you to bear in mind that you can't have it both ways.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I'm pleased to respond to the member from Huron-Bruce's comments. I think she raised some excellent issues. The reality is that illnesses don't happen in one-week chunks. What she was trying to raise, and raised very eloquently, was that in fact we need to be more flexible. If we're going to have this type of legislation—and I think there's consensus in the chamber that we need something—let's make it something that's actually going to work for everyone.

Day surgery—there are so many examples where people need one day or they want a break for two days, and the legislation, as it is written currently, is only available in one-week blocks. So we do need to make some substantive amendments to improve the legislation as it is written. We're going to let it go to committee imminently. I hope that that's something the minister will take to heart, and bring forward amendments that we can support.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I also want to be very brief as well. I just wanted to say that I appreciate the member sharing her personal story. It gives a touch of humanity to this place where otherwise sometimes it feels like we're so disconnected from the rest of the province. Those stories that touch home to the people here listening and also, hopefully, to the people listening at home, show that there are people here who really care about making this province a better place. I applaud you for bringing your personal story here to share with us.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's also a pleasure to stand up and commend the member from Huron-Bruce, who's an outstanding member of our PC caucus. Her comments were very compassionate.

I do have to question some of the comments that were made by the minister on the other side of the House, however. I agree with one comment that he made: that he's confused. Other than that, I can't understand where he was going with the comment about freezing wages, because really the only way that we can continue to provide the health care and home care services that we've come to expect is to freeze public sector wages. Otherwise, we won't have anyone in the public sector to pay because we won't be able to afford to pay our public sector workers anything.

Earlier this afternoon, the Minister of Finance stood up and patted himself on the back because the projected deficit for this year is \$9.2 billion. He was excited and happy about the ability to say that. Meanwhile, that same finance minister, when asked about the budget projections for next year, will say it's \$11.7 billion. So there has been nothing done on that side of the House to get our public sector spending under control. We need to

get our costs under control. You've heard time and time again from members on this side of the House, Madam Speaker, that we don't have a revenue problem in Ontario; we have a spending problem in Ontario. The government that has been in power for the last 10 years just doesn't seem to understand that we need to get our spending under control. Otherwise, this province will be headed over a cliff that we're not going to be able to recover from.

That's why we need to get this team off of that side of the House and get the PC team on the government side. We need to clear the decks and bring in some legislation that's going to turn this province around, because what we're seeing right now is fluff and it's taking us nowhere but deeper in debt.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Huron-Bruce has two minutes to respond.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I appreciate everyone's comments. When we talk about health care and caregiving of our loved ones, it does touch home, and it does hit you right in your heart.

I have to first respond to the Minister of Community and Social Services to help his confusion a little bit. He was reflecting on front-line services, but I can tell you that we need to take a look at how front-line services are facilitated, because right now in my riding—and I'm sure everyone in this House has similar experiences—there's disparity. There are nurses who are receiving one wage and folks who work for agencies like One Care who are getting a different wage but doing exactly the same job, and more so, enabling people to be at home. That disparity has to be addressed, and how do we fix that? We need to take a look at our bloated bureaucracy so that we can ensure that there's an equitable delivery of front-line services, and that is a point that cannot be confused with anything else.

I certainly appreciate everyone else's comments.

In terms of flexibility, absolutely: It doesn't matter whether it's an incremental caregiver leave or the recognition of day surgery. In my riding, we need to drive over one hour one way, be it to Stratford or be it to Owen Sound, for day surgery, and if a person needs a ride, that means somebody has to take a day off work. So I commend the member from Dufferin-Caledon for recognizing that.

The members from Bramalea-Gore-Malton and Prince Edward-Hastings, thank you very much for recognizing the compassion that's needed when we talk about this type of legislation. It is truly my hope that we can pass this bill, get it into committee and fix the areas that need to be addressed in order to make it a bill that works for everyone throughout Ontario, so that, more importantly, we can get back to talking about jobs and the economy, where we need to be at.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm pleased to have the opportunity this afternoon to make a few comments on Bill 21, the



Employment Standards Amendment Act (Leaves to Help Families), 2013.

As we've heard, this piece of legislation, which was introduced by the Minister of Labour, would amend the Employment Standards Act to create a number of scenarios where an employee could take an unpaid leave. These include caring for a critically ill loved one or, for parents, the horrific situation in which they would be faced with the disappearance or the death of a child due to a criminal act. As a parent, I can't imagine anything worse. We can all understand that it would simply be impossible, nor would we expect it of someone, to go through such a devastating experience and continue to show up for work every day, so I think it's important that we, as a society and as members of the Legislative Assembly, do all we can to support those individuals who face those tragic events.

Offering families this kind of leave helps create the kind of compassionate, caring society that we all strive to build. These provisions ensure that an employee who has experienced such a trauma in their family can at least know their job will be waiting for them once they've had an opportunity to put their life back together. At such an emotional time, no one should face the added burden of being worried about their employment.

I think it's important to take a few moments to explain to people exactly how the bill works and the situations in which an employee would qualify for one of those leaves. I'm not going to belabour the points in the bill, but through this legislation, the minister proposes to offer a family caregiver up to eight weeks per year in leave. To qualify, the employee must be caring for someone whom a doctor has confirmed has a critical illness or injury that leaves them unable to care for themselves. And it introduces a leave of up to 37 weeks for parents who must take time from work to care for a critically ill child.

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It also creates the crime-related child death or disappearance leave that would give up to 104 weeks of leave to an employee whose child dies as a result of a crime, and 52 weeks in the case of a child who disappears through a criminal act.

I want to say, in all of those circumstances it's again important to point out that this bill creates an unpaid leave. There's no cost associated—I think the minister has made this point—no cost incurred by the government as a result of the legislation. I have to say that employers that I know would, in those kinds of terrible situations that we're talking about, ensure that an employee's job was safe. I do think it's important to enshrine these rights in the Employment Standards Act. Definitely, this is a bill that I'm sure everyone knows by now our caucus is going to support.

I do want to take some time to explain why the issue of family leave is one that's very topical in my riding of Leeds–Grenville. It's been mentioned during the debate on Bill 21 that the federal government recently introduced changes to the Canada Labour Code. I'm proud to say those changes in federal legislation were the result of

reforms provided in a private member's bill introduced by my federal colleague the MP for Leeds–Grenville, Mr. Gord Brown. Gord and I are good friends. We've known each other for a long time, and he has been an invaluable resource. He has provided me great advice and guidance over the years. I have to tell you how proud he was to join Prime Minister Stephen Harper to announce the compassionate care leave for parents with critically ill children.

Under the federal leave provision, parents who must take time away from work to care for a child with a life-threatening illness can apply for a special employment insurance benefit for up to 37 weeks. This was a tremendous achievement for Mr. Gord Brown, my MP, and all of Leeds–Grenville as he introduced a private member's bill proposing this compassionate care leave for parents every year since 2004.

Members should know that his inspiration for that bill came from Sharon Ruth, a mom in Oxford Station who was determined to help other families after her own experience with her critically ill daughter, Colleen. In caring for Colleen, the family had to go all in, and it meant taking time off the job and losing income. Really, I think that's a choice that any parent would make when it comes to dealing with the health of a child. It wasn't easy on their family, and I know that the turmoil that Sharon and her family faced led them to MP Brown's office and ultimately inspired him to table his private member's bill.

I'm pleased to say the story has a happy ending on two counts. While there's no making up for the financial losses that the Ruth family faced, Sharon's passion and MP Brown's determination created an EI-supported leave that ensures some 6,000 Canadian families won't experience what she did. Of course, the happiest outcome is that Colleen's cancer is in remission. So having met Sharon, I'm sure that Bill 21, even though it only provides unpaid leaves, is one that she and her family are watching very closely. I know, frankly, that's one reason that I'm pleased to support this bill as proposed.

It's important to note that in speaking here about the federal legislation, one of the significant improvements made in Bill 21 is that it clarifies some inconsistencies between the Canada Labour Code and Ontario's Employment Standards Act. It aligns with the federal critically ill child care leave that I just outlined, as well as the 35-week EI-supported leave for families who lose a child as a result of a criminal act. From a practical point of view, aligning the provincial and the federal rules for employers is the right thing to do.

As we know, Bill 21 isn't this government's first attempt to amend the Employment Standards Act and create a parental and caregiver leave. I have to say the reason we're debating, I think, a better bill today is because of the position our PC caucus took with the legislation when it was first introduced as Bill 30. That bill, while certainly well intentioned, had several flaws that were pointed out during the important debate. To his credit, the minister did work to refine Bill 21 rather than

doing what a number of his Liberal colleagues did, and that's just reintroduce the same old same old bill after the House prorogued.

We have faced some criticism for continuing to debate this legislation. I personally can't understand that. The experience, to me, of what happened when Bill 30 died on the order paper, when former Premier McGuinty prorogued the Legislature and ran away at the height of the gas plant scandal—the reintroduction of Bill 21 shows why debates, like we're having today, are so important.

On the surface, some constituents might ask why I'd want to pursue debate on a bill to create a family leave. Isn't that something, they might ask, that I would like to support? Of course, by supporting this bill, or any other bill, I think our party, in opposition—obviously, we don't want the government just to write a blank cheque.

That's part of our Westminster system: Through debate, all 107 of us have the opportunity to bring our unique perspectives, our unique voices, from our ridings and the people we represent. It's the same reason that sends a bill—even one that receives unanimous consent on second reading—to committee for a final review and hearings before it comes back for third reading.

I believe that considering all points of view and giving stakeholders the opportunity to provide their input is something that we shouldn't be discouraging. In fact, we should be doing a lot more of it.

I know we've had lots of debate. I think, from our perspective in our caucus, our voices have been heard on Bill 21. We've made it quite clear this week. I'm glad that I can look down at our House leader, Mr. Wilson; he has been very clear. I know our leader, Tim Hudak, is very clear: We want to clear the decks. We'd like to deal with some legislation that's going to create jobs and improve our economy. We need to move some of these bills forward for discussion.

I'm not going to apologize for taking time today to speak or to support any other MPP's right to do so. It's the job that, Speaker, quite frankly, I was elected to do. I'm going to represent my constituents. I'm going to make sure their comments are on the record. But I know, from our perspective, we're quite prepared to end debate on this bill and have it go forward through committee.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity, and I hope that this will be the end of debate on Bill 21.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments? Questions?

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I rise to support, I think, the previous speaker and his comments, and that is that this is a great bill. I think it has had a lot of debate.

It impacts families at the time that they need it the most, sometimes when they're experiencing tragedies that we all hope we would never experience in our lives, but we do from time to time, and we need that extra help to deal with that. Bill 21 is a bill that does that.

I think it's time that we've moved on with it, so I rise in support of moving this on, and I think the previous speaker was saying that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Questions and comments?

You have two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm not going to use two minutes, Speaker. I want to thank the member for Oakville for his comments. I think my last paragraph, my last few lines of my speech, pretty well said it all. We're quite prepared to allow debate to collapse on Bill 21 and get it to move to committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

Seeing none, Mr. Naqvi has moved second reading of Bill 21, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 in respect of family caregiver, critically ill child care and crime-related child death or disappearance leaves of absence.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

I've received a deferral note. This will be deferred until deferred votes on Wednesday, September 25.

*Second reading vote deferred.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Orders of the day.

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The minister has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow.

*The House adjourned at 1620.*



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Helena Jaczek, Jane McKenna  
Paul Miller  
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## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature



## Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

## Journal des débats (Hansard)

Wednesday 25 September 2013

Mercredi 25 septembre 2013

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 25 September 2013

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 25 septembre 2013

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### PROTECTION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 SUR LA PROTECTION DU DROIT À LA PARTICIPATION AUX AFFAIRES PUBLIQUES

Mr. Gerretsen moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 83, An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act in order to protect expression on matters of public interest / *Projet de loi 83, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les tribunaux judiciaires, la Loi sur la diffamation et la Loi sur l'exercice des compétences légales afin de protéger l'expression sur les affaires d'intérêt public.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Attorney General.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I'm very pleased to start the leadoff on this bill, which I think is extremely important for the people of Ontario. I will be sharing my time with my parliamentary assistant, the member from Scarborough Southwest.

This bill is a very important step to allow individuals to have a say in matters of public interest without fear of intimidation or repercussions. I and the government believe in its merits, believe in the principles of the bill, and I firmly believe that it will bring a greater degree of fairness to a system of justice that we have here in Ontario, of which we can all be very proud. It is about public participation, freedom of expression and justice. This bill, if passed, would defend public expression and encourage debate on matters of public interest.

I should say at this point in time that a number of private members' bills have been introduced along this concept, and I would like to pay particular tribute to my colleague the Minister of Labour, who as a private member introduced a similar bill to the one that we're introducing today as a government bill some two or three years ago. I thank him for his input.

Our government is very concerned about any abuse of process in our court system which unfairly targets our citizens and ties up precious public resources. That's

why, amid growing concerns about strategic lawsuits appearing in the Ontario courts, in May 2010 our government convened an expert panel to study the issue of strategic litigation and make recommendations as to what steps our government should take to address it.

The first thing that the general public may ask is, "What is a strategic lawsuit?" Well, it is primarily a lawsuit brought before the court by one party against another party or individual as a tactic for silencing or intimidating the other party.

Specifically, we asked the panel that my predecessor set up in May 2010 to determine, first of all, a test for courts to recognize what is and is not a strategic lawsuit. We wanted it to determine the appropriate remedies in cases where it is held that a court case is a strategic suit. We wanted to define appropriate limits to the protection of any proposed legislation. We also wanted the panel to determine appropriate parties to benefit from those protections and, finally, what methods can be used to prevent abuse of any future anti-SLAPP legislation.

The advisory panel itself was balanced between plaintiff and media lawyers, and included a trio of the foremost experts on the issues surrounding the balance of protecting public participation with the protection of reputation and economic interest. It is always a balancing act.

The panel was chaired by Dr. Mayo Moran, dean of the University of Toronto law school, who is also an expert in constitutional law and the private law on civil wrongs. It was also made up of Peter Downward, partner with Fasken Martineau, who has written authoritative legal texts on both libel and defamation, as well as Brian MacLeod Rogers, who is an adjunct professor at Ryerson University's School of Journalism.

The practising barristers also brought considerable expertise on the Rules of Civil Procedure and courtroom dynamics. This bill is a direct result of the expert advisory panel's recommendations. The bill provides a unique, made-in-Ontario solution to the issue of strategic lawsuits.

Strategic lawsuits are a relatively new phenomenon in Canadian courts. The Ontario proposal has benefited from the lessons learned from jurisdictions in the United States, as well as in Quebec and British Columbia. It also seeks to build upon and strengthen our province's existing laws and freedoms.

Importantly, our bill also upholds the value of reputation, one of the most important assets a person or business can possess. Given this key consideration in



developing our bill, we have worked hard to balance our citizens' freedom of expression with the protection of reputation and economic interests.

I would like to take just a moment and be given an opportunity to outline the legislation that we are proposing in some detail. The proposed Protection of Public Participation Act has several main components, requiring amendments to—as you've heard in the title—three existing laws: the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act.

Let me first of all deal with the amendments to the Courts of Justice Act. By amending the act, we are proposing a fast-track review process for lawsuits alleged to be brought for strategic reasons rather than to remedy legitimate complaints. Once again, strategic lawsuits, it should be remembered, are lawsuits brought to the court by one party against another as a tactic for silencing or intimidating the other individual. As we define them, strategic suits do not pertain to any dispute, but rather must be about matters of public interest.

For example, in a defamation claim a suit would be considered strategic if the act of suing an individual to ensure his or her silence has the effect of shutting down public debate on a matter that could reasonably be expected to be of concern to an entire community. In this situation, the proposed legislation gives the defendant who believes that they are being targeted unfairly an opportunity to ask the court to dismiss the case before a long and expensive court battle ensues.

0910

What happens, then, when a defendant feels that it is a strategic lawsuit launched against them? Well, at the defendant's request, the court could use a test to determine whether or not the suit should be allowed to proceed. In applying the test, the court would seek answers to the following three questions, and this is fundamental to the bill that we're bringing forward today:

The first question that has to be answered is, is the lawsuit about a matter of public interest? It will be up to the defence, the person who's being sued, to convince the court that its dispute is not simply a private matter but that the public good is at stake.

Second, if it is a matter of public interest, the question then becomes, does the plaintiff's case have substantial merit? This is what the plaintiff would have to demonstrate.

Third, can the plaintiff show that he or she has suffered, or is likely to suffer, harm serious enough to justify stopping the public expression or debate on the matter of public interest? If not, then under the proposed legislation, the case would be dismissed.

As we all know, speed is such an important aspect of these provisions because it provides clarity for all the parties quickly while carefully balancing their interests. Under the proposed fast-track process, the request to dismiss the lawsuit—in other words, where a defendant alleges that it is a strategic lawsuit—must be heard within 60 days of the defendant's motion to the court to have the test applied and before the case could proceed any further

in court. This expedited process is a key provision in nearly every American statute of its kind, so it is not a delaying tactic. Sixty days are set aside when this matter has to be determined.

Furthermore, the bill asks the court to determine the effect of the lawsuit against public participation based upon available evidence rather than its intent, which is a far more complex undertaking. By helping the court to quickly and efficiently identify these strategic suits, we hope that our proposed fast-track process—the 60-day process from the time that the application is made—would help level the playing field for the targets of strategic suits.

At the same time, removing frivolous claims from our court system frees up, of course, valuable public resources and allows our judges to focus their time and attention on more serious matters.

Our government, and I would hope everyone in this assembly and throughout the province of Ontario, takes access to justice extremely seriously. It is an issue that the members have likely heard a lot about in their own ridings from time to time. It was of high interest and has been for every meeting that I attended among judicial leaders at yesterday's Opening of the Courts here in Toronto, which I had the pleasure to attend. Many of our judges have spoken out about this—chief justices have spoken out—how important access to justice is.

Over the past several years, my ministry and our government have been working hard on a number of fronts to make our justice system more accessible and responsive to the needs of our citizens. Under this proposed bill, once a statement of claim is filed, the defendant could immediately file a motion asking the court to dismiss the action as a strategic lawsuit, and that motion would have to be heard within 60 days. If a motion like this is brought, it would immediately put a stop to the proceedings as no further steps would be allowed to occur until the motion was decided. So, therefore, within the 60 days, the judge would apply the three-part test that I spoke about before to determine whether or not the case was a strategic suit and whether or not it should be allowed to proceed.

Again, the judge would first ask the defendant to show that his or her statements against the other party amounted to a matter of public interest. If he or she were successful in showing that the statements they previously made were indeed concerns of public interest, the judge would move on to the next part of the test. In the second step, the judge would ask the plaintiff to show that its claim had merit and, if so, that the harm endured by them was serious enough to outweigh the value of the defendant's continued expression on that matter of public interest.

As the members are aware, our bill also proposes to give the successful defendant his or her costs against the plaintiff on a full indemnity scale. In other words, if the suit turns out to be a strategic lawsuit in the opinion of the judge, full costs can be recovered by the individual against whom the action is taken. Given that the motion

would be heard within about 60 days, I expect that these costs would not be as excessive as they of course would if the matter went on to trial on a full-scale basis.

By introducing the fast-track process, our government is hoping to strike a balance between recognizing the importance of protecting our rights and freedoms to speak out when public interest is at stake and also recognizing that sometimes those expressions can go too far, and that's not fair either. It's certainly a difficult balance to achieve. There are many, many factors to consider. As I indicated before, upon the introduction of this proposed legislation and earlier, we recognize that, while freedom of expression is extremely important, this proposed law does not mean that people can be carefree in expressing their views. The bill does not make it an open season on anyone or on any kind of business.

We know that reputation is important. It is vitally important to protect an individual's integrity. The bill is designed to protect the reputation of individuals. Therefore, I would like to discuss two other related changes we are proposing through this bill which would amend both the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act.

As some of the members here may be aware, conversations between two or more people on a matter of shared concern are considered privileged. In other words, because the parties share a direct interest in the matter, their conversations about that matter are protected by law. That means that none of them can be sued for either libel or slander so long as they are not untruthful about the particular matter about which they're talking.

Under the current laws, a group of citizens may meet to discuss their shared problem and be confident that those conversations will be protected. Under the Libel and Slander Act, so long as they are without malice, those conversations are privileged. If, however, a reporter from a local newspaper, radio station or television station shows up, that privilege is lost.

It may come as a surprise to some that, under our current laws, that same group of citizens is no longer protected as soon as their conversations are reported by a third party, such as the press, or are circulated on social media, which of course is very common nowadays. Like the chilling effect of a strategic lawsuit, this nuance in libel law can deter frank conversations about matters of public concern—and it's always matters of public concern that we're interested in. Doing so can potentially prevent important matters from receiving the free and open hearing that they deserve. We don't think that is right or fair, so our proposal extends privilege to cases where these communications were reported, in the media or otherwise.

It has been said that healthy public discussions are a cornerstone of a healthy, well-functioning democracy. That's why it's important that discussions should not be hindered by the arrival of a reporter with a microphone or a local blogger with his or her smartphone in hand. Rather, these people should—most times—be welcomed in those kinds of discussions. I'm very glad that, with this

bill, we can support our province's strongly held democratic values, even in a seemingly very small way.

#### 0920

The Statutory Powers Procedure Act is going to be amended as well, if this bill is adopted. Our proposed bill provides for a change to the law governing regulatory boards and administrative tribunals. Under the current law, administrative tribunals, of which we have many in this province, may hold hearings to determine if one party should pay the other party's legal costs after a case has been decided. Now, these hearings could be conducted in person, which can sometimes be very lengthy and costly for all involved, especially for vulnerable parties. It is not unknown for these kinds of discussions to take longer than the court cases or the administrative tribunals themselves. Our proposed change would allow parties to make their arguments about how costs should be awarded in written submission to the tribunal. This would help result in faster decisions. All parties would be allowed to make written submissions with respect to the issue of costs. Like the proposed fast-track review process, it is our hope that this provision would encourage cases to be dealt with more quickly, contributing to a more efficient justice system that makes the best possible use of our public resources.

This has been just a high-level overview of some of the complex legal issues and considerations the panel addressed as it formed its recommendations. However, I think it's quite fitting that a report about how to protect freedom of expression would itself be subject to a healthy debate, and it has been. It's our view, Speaker, from reviewing the report from the advisory panel, we firmly believe that they've got it right for the people of Ontario. The resulting bill proposes to change the law in order to ensure this balance, and in doing so would help to resolve what we see is a serious imbalance.

Today, I would like this opportunity to once again thank the panel members for their hard work and commitment to their task. But I would also like to thank the dozens of individuals and groups who provided their input to the panel, as well as those who have provided further feedback on the report to the ministry since the report was submitted. All of those contributions have given shape to the bill that we see before us today. I would further like to thank the many individuals and organizations who have come forward to endorse the panel's recommendations for our bill. So far, there have been 142 organizations in this country already, from the Council of Canadians to the David Suzuki Foundation, to name but a few—and I could go on and list the entire list here, Speaker, of 142 different organizations.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Go ahead. I think you should list them.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** You think I should list them. Well, we want to get this bill through to House as quickly as possible, because we've also been very encouraged by the positive comments that have been made by the critic for the Conservative Party and the critic for the New



Democratic Party, as well as other members in this House.

Throughout the process of developing and proposing the bill, we've also received support from numerous groups and individuals with a keen interest in the preservation of human rights and democratic freedoms. I will just quote a few more, for the Minister of the Environment and others in the House. PEN Canada, in a news release issued immediately upon hearing the bill's introduction, stated that the proposed measures would "provide a useful economical way to reduce the incidence of lawsuits which have an undue adverse impact on public participation." We value public participation in our democratic institutions.

Let me make it clear that support for the panel's recommendations and our bill is not just limited to academics and advocates of those who are traditionally the subject of strategic lawsuits. We've also heard from a number of municipal leaders, as well as many people in the legal community, such as the Ontario Bar Association and the Ontario Trial Lawyers Association, as well as leaders among the judiciary who recognize our proposal as sound—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Member from Don Valley East, I can hear you over the speaker, almost.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** This is very, very important for all the members of the House. This is all about making sure that our democratic institutions, of which we all can be proud, are valued by the people of Ontario and by the people in this Legislature. I recognize your intervention there, Speaker, in making sure that the members listen attentively to what is being said today, and as we will listen to others as well on this issue.

But there have been leaders from the judiciary as well. Recently, I received a letter, and I just want to quote from it. A letter from the Honourable Roy McMurtry—amongst others—a long-time Chief Justice of the province of Ontario, a long-serving Attorney General of this province. I believe, as a matter of fact, he's the second-longest serving Attorney General in this province, the longest-serving being Sir Oliver Mowat, who served in this capacity for 23 years, which is a tough record to—

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Mr. McMurtry has a new book out.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Yes.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I purchased it last night.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Mr. McMurtry has just penned a book which is called, I believe, *Memoirs and Reflections*. I'm in the process of reading it as well, but I digress.

I received a letter near the end of November of last year signed by the Honourable Ian Binnie and the Honourable Frank Iacobucci, both members of the Supreme Court of Canada; the Honourable Coulter Osborne, who served in the capacity as our Integrity Commissioner, amongst other things; and the Honourable Roy

McMurtry. Let me just tell you what they told me in a very, very simple letter:

"We are writing to you concerning the issue of strategic lawsuits against public participation...."

"Each of us"—each of these four eminent judges—"has served in a senior capacity in the Canadian judiciary and has considerable experience in the operation of the civil justice system in Ontario."

"We are concerned regarding the continuing presence of meritless lawsuits that have a chilling effect on citizen engagement in matters of public interest. These SLAPP suits"—as they're commonly called—"impede the right of citizens to participate in public decision-making processes, frustrate the proper operation of our court system and expose SLAPP defendants to unnecessary financial and emotional costs."

"There needs to be effective anti-SLAPP legislation in Ontario. Having reviewed the report of the expert advisory panel convened by your predecessor, Chris Bentley, we support its recommendations. The report provides the basis for an effective anti-SLAPP law, which would provide necessary safeguards against SLAPPs and reduce their adverse impact on public participation in Ontario."

"We support the adoption of the expert panel's recommendations and urge the Ontario government to act on this issue."

It's signed by the Honourable Ian Binnie, the Honourable Frank Iacobucci, the Honourable Roy McMurtry and the Honourable Coulter Osborne. Very plain. These are individuals who have served this country, this province, extremely well in various capacities, including judiciary capacities. They've seen it happen in their courts. They are saying we should be taking this action.

Also, the Ontario Bar Association has stated that, "Public confidence depends on the ability of our justice system to operate efficiently and to enhance democratic principles. Both of these goals are threatened by the bad-faith litigation that this new legislation is designed to curb. We commend the government for introducing the Protection of Public Participation Act." That was when it was introduced, in June of this year.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed Protection of Public Participation Act contains many important provisions that support our goal of building a fair society. We are creating faster, more efficient civil processes that provide greater clarity for the parties involved. It's a time-limited decision that's going to be made in these cases. We're addressing abusive lawsuits that can waste everyone's time and tie up valuable court resources. We're protecting freedom of expression and public participation, and that is the essence of this bill. But we're also safeguarding reputations, we're protecting economic interests, we're promoting greater access to justice and, as a result, we are building a stronger justice system.

0930

Our bill supports some of our most cherished values of people living in a free and democratic society—our most cherished values as Ontarians and Canadians. So today,

I'm very encouraged with the comments that I've heard so far from the members of the opposition of both parties—positive comments. I urge all members to stand together to support these freedoms and values by supporting our proposed bill, to pass it through this Legislature after having a thorough debate on it, send it to committee—there are always possibilities of making amendments to make the bill better still—and let's put it into practice as soon as possible so the people of Ontario will be the better for it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Scarborough Southwest.

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today to continue debate on the proposed Protection of Public Participation Act.

As you heard just a moment ago, this bill, if passed, would defend public expression and encourage debate on matters of public interest while protecting reputation and economic interests. As the Attorney General explained, this bill has three major components, which would require amendments to three laws: the Libel and Slander Act, the Statutory Powers Procedure Act and, most significantly, the Courts of Justice Act.

First, the Libel and Slander Act provisions address a gap in libel law that can deter, or at least greatly curtail, frank conversations about matters of public interest. Next, a change to the law governing regulatory boards and administrative tribunals would allow parties to make their arguments about how legal costs should be awarded in written submissions and should help result in faster decisions. Finally, the introduction of a three-part test would help our courts quickly identify and deal with strategic lawsuits. Together, these amendments provide a made-in-Ontario solution to protecting free and open debate on matters of public importance while at the same time improving court processes and addressing abusive lawsuits.

Mr. Speaker, the Attorney General has described this bill as a made-in-Ontario approach to addressing the problem of strategic lawsuits. Certainly, in developing the bill we looked at the experiences of other jurisdictions to see if their laws might provide an appropriate model for Ontario, and our expert advisory panel reviewed the prior and current Canadian legislation in the area, as well as relevant law from jurisdictions around the world, particularly Quebec, Australia and several US states. It was the panel's opinion that its proposals would fit best with existing Ontario practices and laws. In other words, only a unique approach crafted by and for Ontarians would do. That's precisely what the panel has done.

After extensive research compiled by the ministry of the Attorney General and hearing nearly 40 written and oral submissions from representatives of the legal community and advocacy groups, the panel submitted a number of recommendations which are comprehensively reflected in our bill.

These recommendations were not arrived at easily, and I commend the panelists for the excellent job they

did in tackling the many complex issues we tasked them with addressing. For example, many have argued that the bill should include a new legal right of public participation. This new right would be at the heart of the motion to dismiss alleged abusive action. On the good advice of our panel, our bill relies on the concept of matters of public interest—"matters of public interest" is the key—a subject which our courts are frequently called upon to consider. For example, recently the Supreme Court of Canada used the concept of public interest in deciding cases about the extent of freedom of expression, which, as the members know, is precisely the kind of question this bill poses.

We agree that a fast-track review process for determining whether lawsuits are strategic or legitimate complaints will work far better and faster if it relies on known principles of law.

Some also argued that the bill should create a separate right to damages for starting such actions, rather than just giving the court discretion to award them. The government wants to reduce the number of lawsuits, not increase them. The question of damages can be properly dealt with as part of the motion to dismiss the lawsuit if the lawsuit record clearly shows an abusive intention. The court hearing the motion can call for further evidence of damages if that is appropriate, as well, without requiring a separate lawsuit on the point.

Interestingly, while proponents of the new right to participation often say that Ontario's law doesn't go far enough, on the opposite end of the spectrum, we have also heard that our approach goes too far. It has been suggested, for example, that the bill upsets the balance of carefully well-crafted laws by which our legal system has weighted competing interests over the years. With respect, the government does not agree with the argument that the current law properly balances the relevant interests. That is why our proposed legislation sets out to deliberately change that balance.

As the Attorney General has pointed out, the bill intends to improve the balance of freedom of expression in matters of public interest with the rights of plaintiffs who, at present, can far too easily rely on the technicalities of libel law and the cost of litigation to suppress public debate. For example, the current law simply presumes that a plaintiff who is defamed suffers harm. What this means is that the plaintiff doesn't need to demonstrate any actual or expected damage as a result of public expression. When it comes to discussion in matters of public interest, this is hardly appropriate. Our Courts of Justice Act amendments would change that rule.

Importantly, the bill would not prevent people or businesses who have been seriously harmed by defamation from getting a remedy through the courts. As the Attorney General remarked earlier, we recognize the value of reputation and want to see it protected. We don't want to see anyone unfairly criticized in a public forum. The panel was equally clear on that point. In proposing these amendments, our government is simply trying to ensure



that there is a speedy and economical method of deciding if the case is actually about such harm. This is about levelling the playing field for defendants, who are all too often at a distinct disadvantage.

The same critics have also said that the bill's rule that a court must balance the harm done against the value of freedom of expression about the public interest is too difficult or too abstract. However, Ontario courts on their own have developed exactly that test in deciding when plaintiffs in defamation cases can compel disclosure of the names of people who have published statements anonymously online. In other words, the courts have the experience to make such decisions. The bill gives them another opportunity to do so.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to highlight another argument that has been raised regarding the proposed change to the law of qualified privilege and how the bill would change it. Some critics have thought that this amendment makes it open season on public figures, in the way that American law does. There is nothing in this bill that would have that effect. What the bill aims to do is reverse a particularly narrow court ruling that has set the law for over 50 years and reduce the risk associated with communications among people who have a direct interest in a public issue.

0940

Mr. Speaker, two years ago our government commissioned a panel of experts to study a new phenomenon in our court system. The panel studied the issue at length, consulting with a wide range of experts, both within Ontario and abroad. In the end, the panel concluded that strategic lawsuits are indeed a problem in Ontario, deterring people from speaking out on matters of public interest. Their report called for the government to take action, and it showed us the best approach in doing so.

Over the past two years, the Ministry of the Attorney General has carefully studied the panel's recommendations, along with the submissions of individuals and organizations that have engaged with us directly on this matter.

The bill you have before you today is a reflection of that collaboration and of years of hard work. It is a bill that balances the interests of both plaintiffs and defendants. It's a practical approach that builds upon the strength of our existing laws and knowledge as well as the lessons learned by other jurisdictions.

It is a proposed course of action that we hope will bring about positive, meaningful change for those who find themselves on the receiving end of unfair lawsuits. In the words of Dr. Mayo Moran, chair of the advisory panel, it's a bill that will support democracy by creating "conditions for a robust debate on issues of public importance."

Finally, by allowing our government to tackle the problem of abuse of process in our courts, it's a way to make our courts more efficient and our justice system work better for all.

I also take heart with the statements of my opposition colleagues in this House. As the member for Dufferin-

Caledon stated on June 4, "So I'm pleased that the Attorney General has taken some action on this. Public participation is the foundation of a healthy democracy, and the reality is that people should not have to fear the threat of lawsuits to voice their concerns." And as the member for Bramalea-Gore-Malton stated the same day, when the bill was first introduced, "Mr. Speaker, this is a vital, important piece of legislation."

In conclusion, I urge all members of this House to support this very important bill. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for giving me an opportunity to speak on this.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** A pleasure to speak to the bill. We do support it, as our critic from Dufferin-Caledon has said.

I want to talk about something a little different this morning; I hope the members will indulge me. Today—September 25, 2013—is the 50th anniversary of the day that my father was elected to this chamber in 1963, as the first person of Polish descent to be elected to the Legislature. I can say the obvious: that I wouldn't be here without my father—on the face of this Earth—but I certainly wouldn't be here in this chamber without the work that he did before me, and I never would have been elected, for certain.

During my first campaign, it was clear to me that the affection that people had for my father in the 24 years that he served here—and he did serve until the date of his death, July 31, 1987, the day that David Peterson called the election at that time. In my first campaign, I heard first-hand stories about how people had worked with my father and respected him and the things that he had done. I still hear that, 10 years later—almost 10 years as an elected member. I hear stories every day about how he worked for the ordinary people and the compassion he showed for the problems that they had in their lives.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Timmins-James Bay.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I am extremely fortunate, and I hope that he's watching, and I hope that in some ways he is approving a little bit of the small way that I'm trying to measure up to the work that he did. You know, I have my heroes in life. I have my sports heroes, people I've followed all my life, but my real hero is my father. So today, I'm proud to speak on his 50th anniversary of being elected. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments? The member from Parkdale-High Park—and can I ask the member from Timmins-James Bay to keep it down a bit, please.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** I just want to commend the Attorney General and his parliamentary assistant for bringing in this bill. Certainly we are in support of it. I think it's something that has been desperately needed by this province for a very long time. I would say that with one small caveat, and that is that credit should have been given to our leader, Andrea Horwath, who first intro-

duced the bill a couple of years ago. Just to set the record straight on that. Always give women credit where women deserve it, so thank you—and all people, for that matter.

I also want to mention something else, and that is that I hope that this bill, even before it's passed—because we know that takes a while—has an effect on what's going on right now. The one instance I'm thinking of is Marineland, where some young trainers are being sued in what can only be described as a classic SLAPP suit, because they spoke out about conditions at Marineland. I know they're watching, and I know they're heralding this day that anti-SLAPP legislation is being introduced. I know, and I hope, it will help them in their endeavours for justice, because truly, we should be protecting those who speak the truth, who speak out and who pay the price for it. They've been fired. That's already too much. But to then be sued is really to add injustice to injustice, and that's what this bill hopes to address.

I couldn't be more supportive. I'm very glad to see this day finally come in the province of Ontario. I think there are many defendants out there who are equally glad to see it come, and I absolutely hope that it has the effect that it intends, not only on future cases but even on those that are before the courts at the moment. Thank goodness we have the freedom to say such things in this House, so I'm going to take this freedom and say such things. I thank, again, the Attorney General for doing what he's done, and his parliamentary assistant.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I also want to start by thanking the Attorney General for putting forward the Protection of Public Participation Act. I am very happy to see this. This is a piece of legislation that I worked on, along with my community of Ottawa Centre, for about a year, and last October 15 I tabled Bill 132—same name, Protection of Public Participation Act—putting in place the expert panel report recommendations. I had a great opportunity to work with the Attorney General and his office in the meantime, after the bill was tabled, and I'm grateful to him and to the government for bringing forward the bill, which is very similar to what I had tabled in the Legislature.

Of course, the work that I did was not on my own. There were a lot of good people who helped me develop that bill, especially coming from my community: people like Albert Gelpin, who lives in my riding and who actually was a victim of a SLAPP suit and fought it off successfully. Albert was the first person who brought this to my attention. The Hintonburg Community Association and Jeff Leiper, the president, in particular, were very instrumental, along with Don Stewart from the federation of community associations, who helped me and backed me in that endeavour. I also want to thank Hugh Wilkins and Will Amos of Ecojustice for their hard work, and Ramani Nadarajah of the Canadian Environmental Law Association for their advocacy and assistance as we did the research, we developed the bill and got it drafted with

the stakeholder conversations and consultations that resulted in Bill 132, that I tabled last year.

I'm very excited that this debate is taking place in terms of making sure that our citizens and community associations can openly speak on issues of public interest, and I look forward to, when I get an opportunity, speaking for at least 20 minutes on this very important bill and why it's important for the province of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

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**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** Of course, the PC Party supports the idea of public participation and public expression in the public interest. That is the basis of our democracy and the basis of everything we stand for in this country: that individuals can stand up and speak to issues that they feel are a problem for our society.

To have them struck with SLAPP suits, as they're called, is an abuse of the justice process, abuse of the court system, abuse of the law. It's plugging up our courts, and, of course, we would be totally opposed to that. People are waiting far too long to get through the courts with very legitimate cases, and to have frivolous things like this, which are just meant to hurt people, stall people for no legitimate reason, we are totally opposed to.

So it would seem this has been studied very thoroughly, it has been a problem for a long time and it's a worthy piece of legislation that, in principle, we support.

Having said that, I would be very concerned if this was used to hurt people, still, and prevent true slanders from happening. One of these three examples here in our notes is the Big Bay Point development. It would appear there is a legitimate reason to feel that the company may have been slandered by a private environmental group, and yet some people are referring to that as a SLAPP.

So if there's legitimate slander, we want the court system to work and to be able to be used to sue the people who are committing a legitimate slander. That is justice. That's what the courts are meant for, and we would not want anything to interfere with justice happening.

Other than that, Mr. Speaker, I would say that we just have to be cautious and make sure that justice is still what we want to pursue, and we don't want to abuse people's rights to not be able to sue if they are slandered.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The Attorney General has two minutes.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I'd like to thank all the members for their very positive comments. Normally, of course, we like to stick to the subject at all times in comments, and in questions as well, but I would just like to pay tribute to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke area and the tribute that he gave to his father for being elected 50 years ago. We are all shaped by our parents in one way or another, and it's quite obvious that the effect that his father had on him from having served here for 24 years has served the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke very, very well.



The essence of this legislation is this: If there isn't feeling by a defendant that it's what's commonly referred to as a SLAPP lawsuit, that within 60 days that individual can make an application to the court and a determination will be made within that 60 days. If the tests that we talked about and that we've outlined—and that the parliamentary assistant has outlined—are not met, well then the lawsuit proceeds, and that's just in comment to the member from Lanark–Carleton's comments.

There may still be situations where this goes on, where the lawsuit will go on if the test is not met—the three-part test—and that is really the prime consideration of the bill.

The underlying principle is that people should have the right to express their views on matters that are of a public interest. That is the foundation of our democratic principles, the foundation of the values that we hold in this province. That's really what we're trying to protect in this particular case, Speaker.

I'm very pleased that this bill seems to have the support of all members of the House, so I would just urge everyone to get on with it. Let's give it second reading, send it to committee, have it come back here for third reading and implement it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** While we have shown interest in supporting Bill 83—not so fast. I think we still do need to debate it a little bit.

You know, in this chamber, we have a rather unique ability to say whatever we want about whomever we want—parliamentary privilege. As soon as we walk out these doors, we don't have that same ability. We are open to slander. But in here, we can say—and some people often do—whatever we want about individuals.

The general public does not have that same privilege, and I think what's coming forward with Bill 83, the Protection of Public Participation Act, is going to give some comfort to the public, who want to make sure their voices are heard, who want to participate in things that are happening within their community, and we need to allow that. That's, I believe, the essence of why we're bringing forward Bill 83 and why we want to talk about it today.

It is my honour, as the Progressive Conservative Attorney General, to join in this debate of government Bill 83, the Protection of Public Participation Act, 2013. I will give credit where credit is due. This actually first came forward as a private member's bill idea from the Minister of Labour—at that point, the member from Ottawa Centre. It was based on some good research, good facts, and it's nice to see that it has transferred from a private member's bill into a government bill.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** It was Andrea Horwath, a private member's bill in 2008.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Okay. You can talk about that as well. Thank you for the correction. I understand that it has also come forward from the NDP caucus.

Let me start by saying that the Attorney General has made some good points in his presentation. For my part, I'd like to take some of my time going over past cases that are commonly pointed out as examples of SLAPPs—SLAPP, of course, being a short form that you'll hear a lot during this debate: strategic litigation against public participation. Going over specific examples of SLAPPs, or at least what are commonly accepted as examples of SLAPPs, is extremely beneficial because it allows us and our constituents to understand just what it is we are really discussing here with this bill. I know that when I've spoken about this issue with people before, it's often one that gets a little convoluted. To be honest, it all seems rather legal and may be trivial to the average person. But that's why it is important to reflect on some specific SLAPP examples because it puts into context the issue and allows us to see the human side of what happens during a SLAPP. When we debate these things in the legal lexicon, it can often become muddled and abstract, and I'm saying that as a non-lawyer. But when we focus on specific examples and specific people, that's when we can truly start to see what a difference this legislation can make.

I also think it's important for our constituents and the people watching at home to know how SLAPPs typically come about so that they are aware of what a SLAPP is and when or how to recognize them. That's why I will be using some of my time to reflect on past SLAPP cases and their various effects and ultimately their motivation. I also intend to cover the bill itself and then analyze how the measures contained within Bill 83 match or don't match with the problems demonstrated by the examples I intend to go over. Some of these cases, as you will see, are quite daunting, and the fact of the matter is that we need to make sure this legislation is capable of doing what it is meant to accomplish, because no Ontario resident should have to choose between having a say about something that is happening within their community or risk being sued into financial ruin. Finally, I will conclude by summarizing why SLAPPs should absolutely be stopped from occurring, and that's why this legislation should be supported by all members in this chamber.

This government bill was introduced just before the summer recess and has been somewhat of a long time coming. You see, Bill 83 actually stems from the Anti-SLAPP Advisory Panel, which submitted its final report to the Attorney General in October 2010. No one can ever argue that we rush things through here in the parliamentary process. Of course, that's what we are really talking about here today. A SLAPP is a lawsuit that's brought against an individual for the primary purpose of silencing that individual's opinion. SLAPPs are almost always some form of libel or slander allegation and almost always are for unrealistic and unreasonable amounts of damages. You see, though, that's the point of the SLAPP: not to win the lawsuit—because many of them actually never get to appear in the courts—but rather to scare the defendant so that they dare not speak out against the claimant again.

The reason this is particularly problematic, however, aside from a gross misuse and waste of taxpayers' dollars by needlessly clogging down our justice system, is because it's not only an injustice to the defendant but also to the community. And if there is one thing I think we can all agree on, it is that there are way too many backlogs happening—

*Interjection.*

1000

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** If the member from James Bay wants to hold court, he might want to go outside in the lobby, because I'm having trouble hearing the member speaking. It's that loud. Your voice is carrying.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Thank you, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** And, I might add, it's the last warning.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Thanks, Speaker.

The reason we have to deal with this is that there are a lot of reasons why our court system is clogged right now. If we can remove this and expedite SLAPPs, that's going to help us in other ways to free up some court time.

It's because the community's planning procedures are manipulated, because community members who could have had valuable contributions to make are instead intimidated out of commenting on proposals. The end result is a community planning process without the community involvement. This is an entirely undesirable situation, Speaker.

That being said, we typically think SLAPPs involve developers and residents, yet there are a number of examples where this is not the case. But I will get into that in a bit further detail later on.

For now, going into a discussion on past SLAPPs, please bear in mind that the key factor here is whether the lawsuit's prime function is either to prevent someone from participating in a public process or to punish them for doing so. That is a certain principle that's important when discussing SLAPPs: that an individual has had their right to express their opinion severely limited due to coercion.

I would now like to move on and discuss three different SLAPPs and how each of them are both unique from, and identical to, one another. They are unique from each other because each of them involves a different type of claimant pursuing the SLAPP. They are identical with one another, however, in that in each case the claimant has clearly pursued litigation for the purpose of silencing or punishing the defendant. It is this second point that primarily qualifies each of them as a SLAPP. In all the cases I'm about to discuss, however, I'm not going to refer to either of the litigants by their names, and I don't believe it's relevant for the purposes of our debate here on Bill 83. These cases are simply to illustrate SLAPPs, not to consider the particular individuals involved. As such, I will try to refer to the party bringing forward the SLAPP as the claimant and the party the SLAPP is being used against as the defendant, for the non-lawyers in the room.

The first SLAPP I would like to discuss actually occurred in British Columbia. This SLAPP arose from the following context. The claimant wanted to convert his land, which was forested, into farmland. To do this, however, he had to find and add approximately 750,000 cubic metres of soil to his property to properly level it out so it would be suitable for farming. In order to do this, he of course needed a permit from the local municipality, so in October 2009, he submitted a permit application to his local township.

Now, the defendant in this case owns land very near the claimant's property. When the defendant became aware of the claimant's permit application, she became quite concerned about a possible negative impact on the streams that flowed through his land. The defendant also happened to be a member of a local organization whose mission is to protect and enhance the integrity of the watersheds in the area. So the defendant decided to take action against the claimant's permit application.

Consequently, the defendant and the local water preservation organization she was part of both began speaking out against the claimant's desired permit. The organization came out with written material opposing the permit, and the defendant produced a report outlining the potential damage that the claimant's permit may cause to the local watershed. There was also a meeting held where the defendant spoke about her objections to the claimant's permit application and her concern for the wider region.

In light of all of these developments, the local township decided to put the claimant's permit application on hold. The township argued that it needed more time to study and measure the environmental impact of the application.

On September 1, 2010, two weeks before the township placed the permit on hold, however, the claimant sued the defendant, the organization with which she was involved, and one other individual, claiming \$13 million in damage against all three. The claim against the individual herself was for \$5.5 million. The defendant's lawyer soon advised the claimant via letter that his lawsuit was bound to fail because it disclosed no viable cause of action. In essence, the claimant had no case, as there were no facts to support his lawsuit.

On February 19, 2011, the defendant even offered to pay the claimant \$2,000 in full settlement for his claim, but to no avail.

The claimant made serious allegations against the defendant, including that she had made unfounded and false statements to local residents about his permit application. The claimant argued that this was done for the purpose of gathering signatures on a petition opposing his application, and for the purpose of intentionally harming him.

Speaker, we are all in this chamber very familiar with the use of petitions opposing and supporting activities that happen within the provincial government. The same thing occurs at our municipal level, and to somehow suggest that we would like to freeze the ability of com-



munity members to seek out and get petitions in support or opposition of a particular change is, I hope, pretty offensive to all of us.

He also alleged that the defendant organized public meetings only to spread false information about his permit application and that the defendant made false statements about the permit to the local member of the provincial Legislature. Again, we're all pretty used to and comfortable with attending public meetings on specific issues. We have to ensure that that public involvement can continue.

The claimant also argued that the defendant endangered the public by using a low-flying aircraft to photograph him and acted maliciously by making false statements to make him lose his farming career. All in all, the claimant basically argued that the defendant defamed him and conspired to injure him and his property. The claimant also made similar allegations about the local water preservation organization.

So, to recount: An individual, the claimant, sought to obtain a permit to alter their property, and their neighbour, the defendant, objected to this alteration on the basis that it would have a negative effect on the larger area and the community. Clearly, this is an example of an individual staying involved in their community and trying to participate in its growth and development. In other words, this is clearly an individual participating in a public matter; namely, whether or not the claimant's proposed alterations would have had an effect on the larger area the public inhabits. Ultimately, that's why we ask for permits and that's why we have that involvement, because we want people to participate and comment.

Thus, by undertaking such vigorous and overwhelming legal action in response to this, the claimant has already partially demonstrated this case to be a SLAPP, as one could conceivably argue that the claimant is attempting to punish the defendant via the lawsuit.

What the further demonstrates this to be a SLAPP, however, is the claimant's clear lack of interest in actually pursuing the case as a legitimate legal matter. For example, when the defendant brought an application to dismiss the claimant's lawsuit and provided notice to the claimant, he did not attend the hearing. I guess at that point it wasn't important enough to him. That being said, all the material the claimant filed with the court was still considered, even though he did not show up.

What the judge determined was that the claimant had provided no evidence of his allegations against the defendant. The judge eventually concluded that the claimant had merely asserted what he believed had occurred, with no evidence to support his claims. The judge determined that not only had the defendant not acted maliciously or intended to harm the claimant, but was instead merely exercising her right of free speech to disagree with the claimant's permit application. As a result, the defendant was naturally voicing her opposition to the permit application and had done nothing unlawful whatsoever. Clearly, there can be no mistaking this for anything short of a prototype SLAPP.

## 1010

To demonstrate the negative effect that SLAPPs can have, however, consider the fallout from this one example that I have highlighted here today. As a result of the SLAPP brought against her and the ordeal she went through fighting it, the defendant ended her community involvement out of fear that she may again be a target for another SLAPP. She stopped attending the water preservation organization meetings and stopped participating in other environmental causes. Furthermore, she no longer gave advice to her neighbours on similar issues, and discontinued her volunteer work.

Just think of the negative impact this SLAPP caused the defendant, Speaker, to say nothing of what the community lost in having that volunteer participate. You know, here we have an extremely engaged citizen, who is concerned about her neighbours and her community's well-being, and thanks to a SLAPP she is totally shell-shocked into forgoing all future efforts to improve her community. I think it says a lot about the kind of damage SLAPPs can ultimately cause. The defendant ended up paying over \$20,000 in legal fees and over \$4,000 in disbursements due to this SLAPP, all because she wanted to be involved in a community's development. And that is just the individual defendant in this case.

When it comes to the organization she was involved with, the damage is, respectively, just as bad. The SLAPP had a severe negative impact on the work of the organization, as all of its time had been spent on defending the lawsuit. There was little time and resources left to devote to organizing other activities or initiatives. The SLAPP basically silenced the organization, as it did not speak out against the claimant's permit application from the moment the SLAPP was filed. That's why we sometimes hear of SLAPPs or the lawyer's letter as litigation chill: It essentially puts the fear of the litigation to stop you from participating.

Unfortunately, as a result of this litigation, the organization was forced to consider ceasing operations altogether once the SLAPP had been settled. Directors at the organization were forced to buy public liability insurance, at a significant cost, out of fear that they may again be the victim of lawsuits in response to their public participation in government decision-making processes. Eventually, on May 25, 2011, the claimant's claim was dismissed, with costs awarded to the defendants.

Speaker, this is the epitome of a SLAPP: long—remember, I said this was over two years in process—fruitless, expensive and highly damaging. This legal action was clearly brought forward to limit the defendant's ability and desire to participate in public matters. This is an example of a private individual pursuing a SLAPP against another private individual. Again, it is for the same reason as the next two examples: limiting or stopping public participation. But it differs in that here we had one private individual bringing a SLAPP against another private individual, whereas next I will discuss a SLAPP where an elected official with the power of a municipality and the money connected to it brought a

SLAPP against people for the sole purpose of silencing their criticism of her.

This next example, Speaker, is quite concerning, as an elected official, and I think we all have to be aware of the implications. It offers perhaps the most startling but also clear case of a SLAPP example that I will discuss here today. In this case, the claimant was the mayor of an Ontario town, and the defendants were members of the town's news media. One of them was also a former councillor with the town. In essence, one of the defendants, also known for commenting on the town's municipal issues, frequently wrote articles dealing with municipal issues as a recurring column that was published on the Internet or a local website focused on current events in town. I'm sure all of us have examples of individuals who do this. In my own community, the Orangeville Banner has two different individuals who write semi-weekly columns commenting on municipal, federal and provincial affairs. I happen to quite enjoy Doug Harkness's columns. He is a good friend and tends to see the world through my view. The second is Rob Strang, also a very knowledgeable—

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

## ORDER OF BUSINESS

**Hon. John Milloy:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** A point of order, the government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, first I apologize to the member. I'm just getting up because it's almost 10:15.

I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding today's routine proceedings.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Is there unanimous consent? Agreed.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I move that, during routine proceedings today, reports by committees be taken following petitions, and that the House be authorized to meet beyond its normal hours of adjournment until completion of third reading debate on Bill 95, at which time the Speaker shall adjourn the House to the next sessional day.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Mr. Milloy has moved a motion regarding routine proceedings this afternoon. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It is now 10:15. This House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

*The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Steve Clark:** On behalf of our exceptional page from Leeds–Grenville, Peyton Horning, I would like to introduce, in the west members' gallery, her mother,

Alexandra Prefasi-Horning, and her dad, Paul Horning, who is celebrating his birthday watching question period. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Community Safety and francophone affairs, on a point of order.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Mr. Speaker, I believe that we have unanimous consent that all members be permitted to wear the lapel pin, the Franco-Ontarian flag pin, in recognition of Franco-Ontarian Day today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The minister responsible for francophone affairs has asked for unanimous consent to wear the pins today. Do we agree? Agreed.

The member from Elgin–Middlesex–London.

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** Today I'd like to introduce a guest from the Aylmer area: Eric Loewen. Eric ran for the Green Party in the last election. I'm pretty sure he's going to run against me again, but welcome to the Legislature.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That was nice.

The member from Durham.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'd like to acknowledge two of my constituents, rather interesting people: Professor John Traill and his daughter, Corinna Traill, who is actually a member of council in the community of Clarington.

**Mr. Rob Leone:** I know they're a little late getting into the Legislature today, but I want to welcome folks from Career Colleges Ontario who are here at Queen's Park meeting members today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Rick Bartolucci:** I'm pleased to introduce Abbas Homayed. Abbas is with the Ontario Community Newspapers Association. Abbas and his wife, Patricia Mills, define excellence in community papers. The name of the paper is the Northern Life. I suggest that we all read it. I want to thank and welcome Abbas to the House.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** I'd like to welcome to the House today a constituent of mine, Sal Gelsomino, from Napanee, as well as Karen Somerville from the association for Canadians for Properly Built Homes.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'd also like to acknowledge a friend of mine and a friend of my son's—his name is Tim Patriquin—who has served Canada well in the armed forces of Canada.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** I would like to introduce the parents of page Katherine Tom, the page from Willowdale: her father, Christopher Tom, and mother, Julie Tom.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I'd like to welcome the representatives from the Ontario Community Newspapers Association who are here at Queen's Park today. There's a reception this evening, and I would invite all the members of the Legislature to attend that reception.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** On their way into the Legislature are a number of representatives from Career Colleges Ontario who are here to visit with us today. Executive Director Paul Kitchin is leading them, and of course, a good friend of all of us, John Nunziata, is their representative here as well. They'll be here any minute.



**M. Tim Hudak:** Je veux introduire aujourd'hui le président de l'Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario, M. Denis Vaillancourt; le directeur général, M. Peter Hominuk; et M. Benjamin Vachet, conseiller en communications et relations publiques. S'il vous plaît, souhaitez-leur la bienvenue.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Today in the Speaker's gallery we have the former member for Elgin—Middlesex—London in the 37th, 38th and 39th Parliament and Speaker in the 39th Parliament, Mr. Steve Peters.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I just want the former Speaker to know that there's a cry for the other Joe, my other brother.

Accompanying Mr. Peters is Isabel Dopta, from Guelph. Welcome.

#### DECORUM IN CHAMBER

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Yesterday, the member from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke asked for some clarification of a directive from me to withdraw certain language and to comment on another issue. The member indicated that his use of the full name of the Premier should have been allowed in the context of referring to the government.

First, let me be clear on one point as it relates to the other. The withdrawal I sought—and this is clarification—from the member from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke did not relate to the use of the proper name so much as to the language that followed, which is considered in most cases to be unparliamentary. We discussed that. The use of the proper name in the lead-up to the use of this language left the impression that the subsequent accusation was directed at the individual member. In short, in my mind the member from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke said something indirectly that he was prohibited from saying directly. Therein is the danger of using proper names.

Members should not refer to one another by name, but rather by title, position or constituency name. As stated in O'Brien and Bosc, the reason for this is "to guard against the tendency to personalize debate."

When a member is referring to a particular administration as a collective, we have a practice of permitting the Premier's surname to be attached, as in "the Davis government" or "the McGuinty government." This exception stops short, though, of including given names. The proper reference to this current government, therefore, should be "the Wynne government," if it's going to be used.

In the interest of civil discourse and to guard against personal attacks, I seek the co-operation of all members in this regard. Thank you for your co-operation.

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### TEACHERS

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Premier, when the Teacher of the Year can't get a job because he finds himself 800th on the seniority list as a result of the new Liberal hiring policy, regulation 274, doesn't that tell you that something has gone badly off the rails when it comes to teacher hiring in our province?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the Minister of Education will want to comment in the supplementary, but I just want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for raising the issue. I know that it is of concern, and we have heard those concerns, absolutely. I know that the Minister of Education has a working group in place to look at what changes we might be able to make. We're open to that, Mr. Speaker. We've said all along that as we've heard these concerns, we're taking them seriously and we want to do what we can to make it right.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Premier, it's not time for another committee; it's time for some action. This is pretty basic. It's very straightforward. We all care, as parents—I know you do. You want to make sure that your kids, and now your grandchildren, will have the best possible teacher in the classroom. My daughter Miller has been blessed to have that. My dad is a retired principal, and I spoke to my dad about this. He would always look for the teacher who was going to bring the most to the job—the right qualifications; they were going to coach the hockey team; do drama; they brought life experience to the table.

1040

I, as a parent, have a lot of confidence in principals. They make the right decisions for the school. That's the way it's always worked. Under regulation 274—under this Liberal government under your leadership—that's been tossed out the window and now they're hired strictly on the basis of seniority. Clearly, as a parent and grandparent, you would agree that this is not in the best interests of our kids.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** You know, I haven't seen the proposed bill, so I don't know exactly what it will say. But it's really important to me and to us that Ontario's teachers have a fair and consistent hiring practice and process across school boards. That kind of consistency and that kind of predictability is very, very important. Last year, we heard from teachers that that wasn't the case.

The reality is, you know, that the regulation ensures that teaching candidates are chosen by a number of criteria, not just seniority. They can go beyond seniority.

But to go back to my original comment, I recognize that there are concerns, Mr. Speaker. I recognize that there may have been an overcorrection in terms of some of the issues that had been brought forward. That's why there is a working group in place. The Minister of Education and we are open to making changes. We acknow-

ledge that there are concerns, and we will do everything in our power to make sure we get it right.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** To the Premier again: This is not a time for waffling; it's not a time to study the issue. It's a time for action. I have yet to find a person, aside from maybe a teacher union head, who thinks this is appropriate for our kids.

Let me tell you a bit about Jason Trinh. Jason Trinh is the kind of teacher my dad would have hired at Lakeshore Catholic—I do want to say that that school, Lakeshore Catholic in Port Colborne, the school my dad began, celebrated its 25th anniversary this past weekend. I'm proud of that, and I'm proud of what he did. He hired teachers who then rose up the ranks. Some became principals themselves, vice-principals, leaders of the community.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of the Environment, come to order. Minister of Rural Affairs, come to order.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Jason Trinh is an impressive young man. He has his master's in molecular biology. He was actually given the Premier's New Teacher of the Year Award for what he did to inspire in his students a love for science, and brought in a new camp as well to get kids to improve their grades in grade 9 testing.

Why is Jason Trinh 800th on the list? Shouldn't he be number one on the list? Don't we want that quality in our classroom?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** We absolutely agree that it is important to have excellent teachers in our classrooms, and that's exactly what we will do. But I think it's also important to understand that we have thousands of young teachers out there who want jobs, and it's not fair to those young teachers who are out there and want jobs, and perhaps to older teachers who have recently qualified, if we don't even post the job. We need to have some sort of process where, when there is a position available, the job is posted and there's opportunity for interviews so we can select good teachers.

Now, are there some problems with the regulation? Yes. We've heard the problems too. That's why there's a working group, that's why there's a study and that's why I've committed to the sector that if they can find a solution—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

I dare say that in a classroom, somebody giving an answer would not be allowed to be shouted down.

## TEACHERS

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Back to the Premier, if I could, on the same topic. Premier, the Minister of Education says we need a good process. Clearly, the process should be that the best person gets the job. It makes sense. We've

all been inspired. We wouldn't be here in leadership positions as MPPs, as one of the lucky 107 in this place, if we weren't inspired by a teacher.

One of mine was Mr. Komar, at Notre Dame College School in Welland.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Now, don't go after Mr. Komar. He inspired in me a love for economics, and maybe some of the questions I ask today. But if it wasn't for that kind of inspiration, I probably wouldn't be where I am today. You want to have these types of teachers in our schools: experience, of course, but also passion. How are they going to help out the kids in the schools? Are they going to contribute to extracurricular activities?

Howard Goodman, a trustee with the Toronto board, raised another issue on regulation 274, saying it unwittingly puts those diverse new rookies at a disadvantage. He references a Vietnamese school, where a teacher who speaks Vietnamese and could help a lot of these kids is sidelined because of the seniority hiring process.

Will you do the right thing? No studies, no delays—just end this odious practice.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** As the Minister of Education has said, I think that the Leader of the Opposition would agree that not even having a job posted is not a fair practice, so there were obviously changes that needed to be made. The fact is that we are open to making changes. We recognize that there are concerns. We will work with the sector and, as the Minister of Education said, come to some consensus and implement those changes. That is what we've committed to doing.

I have to say that I'm really glad that the Leader of the Opposition is asking a question about education. In his white paper on education, 10,000 education workers would be fired. I would like to suggest that if 10,000 workers in the education system were fired, fewer kids would get extracurricular activities, fewer kids with special needs would get support and the system would not work as well in the best interests of students. So I'd ask him how he sees that as in the best interest of the system.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Obviously, the Premier hasn't taken the time to read the white paper, because it's all about what's best for our kids and raising standards in the classroom. Clearly, if you want to raise the standards of the classroom, you want to make sure the best possible teachers are there with our kids each and every day. Let's call it straight here: You caved in to the teacher unions, and as part of that process you handed over the keys to hiring to the teacher union bosses. I think that's wrong.

When I asked my dad how he did this, he said that basically they posted a job. They would probably get hundreds of applications. They would shortlist. A committee—usually the principal, the vice-principal, the department head—would interview the best candidates and whittle them down to the best list and they'd hire the best teacher. The schools recognized this and celebrated



and grew as a result of that. Other principals say the exact same thing.

Premier, if you admit that your system has problems, why continue for a minute more? Why keep Jason Trinh and excellent teachers on the sidelines? Why not just end regulation 274 now and stop this mess so our kids can get ahead with the best-skilled educators?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I want to—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** As soon as I'm ready to sit down, I don't want you to continue. The member from Stormont is not helping things when I'm trying to explain. As soon as I sit down, don't start up.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I want to just draw attention again to one of the premises underneath the question of the Leader of the Opposition, and that is that somehow working with the education sector, working with the organized teachers in the sector, is not a good thing. I think we need to pay close attention to that, because that underpins the philosophy of the Leader of the Opposition. To work in a collaborative way, to find common ground, to work with the people who are in the classroom and who are part of organizations is not the way that he would work. Getting rid of 10,000 teachers, cancelling full-day kindergarten: That is the track that the Leader of the Opposition would put us on. That's not what we're going to do.

We are seeing advances in our schools. We want a fair and consistent hiring practice, and we're open to changing that regulation.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I think that this is instructive. When the time came to choose between the wishes of the teacher union bosses and what's best for our students, the Premier sided with our union bosses. I don't think that's helpful to our kids. I've talked to a lot of people about this. People are very concerned. We care about how our kids are going to do. We want the best of the best in our classrooms with the kids. It should be based on their skills and determination and their contribution to the school, not that they're pets of the union bosses or highest on the seniority list.

Premier, if you won't act, we will. My colleague from Nepean—Carleton, Lisa MacLeod, is bringing forward a private member's bill today to get rid of regulation 274 and restore what has made our schools strong in the past and rewards decisions by principals and rewards the best possible teachers. If you won't do it, we will. I'll ask you this: Enough consultations, enough committees; do the right thing and support Lisa MacLeod's bill later on this afternoon.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let me just be clear: On this side of the House, what we support is publicly funded education. We increased funding in the education system. It has gone up 44% since 2003. There are 13,300 new teachers in the system. Kids' test scores are up. Graduation rates, when we came into office, were 68% out of high school; now they're 82%.

Kids are doing better. We have one of the finest education systems in the world.

**1050**

There is always room for improvement. Regulation 274 was put in place because there were concerns about the consistency of the hiring practices. It may be that it was an overcorrection and it may be that there need to be changes to it. That's why the Minister of Education is prepared to make those changes.

But make no mistake: Public education is advocated for by this government. We have strengthened the education system, working with the sector. The party opposite would undermine that success and would fire people—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Stop the clock for a moment.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

When my memory is working, I will make this comment. I'm going to ask the member from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke to come to order and I'm going to ask the Minister of Rural Affairs to come to order, and that's the second time.

## AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Yesterday in the House, the Minister of Finance echoed claims by the insurance companies that they've enjoyed very minimal profits. The minister said it was a "fact" that insurance companies are receiving "about 3%" in their ROE profit margins.

Does the Premier stand by this claim?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** The member opposite from that bench talked about the ROE. We are trying to express and make note of the fact that the ROE—if we were to take the return on premium which is calculated in Alberta, for example, the return on premium in Ontario would actually be about 5% to 6%, which is the lowest in any province in this country.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** An independent report written by a long-time insurance industry actuary prepared for today's auto insurance hearings actually shows the industry had, in fact, over \$1 billion of profits last year and that the ROE calculated would be something in the range of 14%. That's four times higher than what the minister claimed yesterday.

Is the Premier ready to admit that they may be wrong about the actual profits that the insurance industry is making?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I've just explained that there's a great difference between this ROE calculation, which

we've already advanced and told FSCO that, on a rolling scale, we want to reduce—it is a formula-based system, and we expect the rate to fall further. But let's be clear: It's the difference between an ROE and the return on premium. I appreciate that there's misunderstanding over there, because it is a complicated initiative and it's a complex issue. We understand that. But we will continue to say that we're overhauling the formula further to make it more transparent for all drivers.

As I've stated, when you compare Ontario to the rest of Canada, the return on premium versus, for example, Alberta—in Ontario, it's 5% to 6%, which is the lowest anywhere in the country.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** What we know is that we're paying the highest rates in the country. That's something we need to fix. It seems like this government is ready to break speed records when it comes to helping the insurance industry but they slam on the brakes when it comes to helping out drivers in this province.

Over the past five years, the industry has enjoyed billions of dollars in savings due to auto insurance reforms. The government has already taken out billions in costs from the system. But for drivers, the rates continue to climb. Salil from Mississauga watched this summer as his rates increased by \$500 to over \$3,000 a year. That's with no new claims, no new car and no accidents.

The minister simply got his facts wrong, and now the government has a choice. Will they stand up for drivers who deserve a break or will they keep helping the insurance industry maintain their record profits?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** The third party has started talking about this, and they've been talking quite a bit in the last number of months, but we on this side of the House have been taking action on this for the last two years. As a result of these actions, we're able to now pass on savings to consumers, and we will continue to do so.

It's not something where you flip a switch and it gets done. It takes a lot of work and it's taken a lot of years to make it happen. We are seeing some results of that, and we'll continue doing what's in the best interests of the public. Yes, we all need champions. We need champions on all sides of the House to work together to make this happen. We will do our part. We will continue to lead.

#### COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, people who have elected us have told me they want us to work hard for them, and they want us to deliver results that make their lives better—for example, reducing auto insurance rates.

Can the Premier tell us how many people she's met with who are concerned about the plight of EllisDon Corp.?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you very much. I appreciate the member opposite asking a question. Having stable

labour relations is always the cornerstone of our government. We have worked extremely hard over the years since coming into office, since 2003, to make sure that we have balanced and stable labour relations. That's why I'm really proud to say that we have a situation in Ontario where 97% of labour agreements are achieved through collective bargaining, which is a tremendous success in terms of the effectiveness of labour relations agreements, and we'll continue to work with all political parties and our labour partners to ensure that that trend continues to progress.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Well, the question was to the Premier, and it was a pretty simple one—"Can you tell us who has been lobbying you to get this piece of legislation passed?"—and all we get is what you're trying to do.

I'm going to ask you the question again. It's a very simple question. Can the Premier tell us who's been lobbying you to fast-track this legislation that's going to benefit just one company in this province: EllisDon?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I think the member opposite knows that the bill he is referring to is a private member's bill that was brought up in this House, and it has been debated and was passed through this House. It's obviously up to committee hearings, which is up to the House leaders to decide whether that process will take place or not.

I think it wouldn't be fair for me to comment on a private member's bill, but of course we listen to all interested parties on issues that are important to all Ontarians. The focus of our job here as a government—and the Premier has spoken about this often—is to grow our economy, to create jobs, to make sure that hard-working Ontarians have opportunities across the province to go to meaningful, good-paying jobs.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** The only thing that appears to be growing is the coffers of the Liberal and Tory parties. Your government is about to embark on a programming motion with the Conservative Party to fast-track a piece of legislation that's going to benefit one company in the sector.

I'm going to ask you the question again. Can the Premier explain to us how you end up putting this piece of legislation as a priority and how and who has lobbied you?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Again, as you know, this is a private member's bill that was brought forward by the official opposition. It has been debated through this House and passed. Of course, this is a minority Legislature, so we have worked with all political parties to make sure that the bills that are important to Ontarians are passed through this Legislature.

I thank the NDP for being big supporters of a lot of the very important legislation that we have passed through this House, including the budget bill that is making life affordable for everyday Ontarians every single day. We look forward to working with all political parties to make



sure that we are growing our economy in this province and creating good-paying jobs for all Ontarians.

### POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** My question this morning is for the Minister of Energy. Good morning, Minister. Your ministry has been given the draft Oakville gas plant cancellation findings from the Auditor General. The previous auditor told us that Mississauga was turned over six to eight weeks in advance. Your people have it; somebody's got it, Minister. Will you tell this House what it cost to cancel the Oakville gas plant, or will you continue the long line of Liberal operatives who have dodged, deleted and distorted the facts?

You told us Mississauga was \$190 million to cancel, but the auditor told us the truth: it was \$275 million. You've stood in this Legislature and told us it was \$40 million to cancel Oakville. Would you care to confess this number this morning, Minister, before the Auditor General spansks you down again?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Before the Auditor General's report on the Mississauga gas plant issue, the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke stood in the House and he made the same accusation to me at the time, that we had the report. My answer at that time was, "No, I'm not aware that the ministry has a copy of the report. I have not seen a copy of the report. I will await the Auditor General to present the report." That's a fact, Mr. Speaker.

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So I'm going to ask the opposition party to stop making accusations that are speculative, that are unfounded, that demean the credibility of people on this side of the House. It's a disgrace.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Speaker, let me tell you what is disgraceful: Minister, you, your deputy, the OPA and the IESO have all missed the September 12 deadline to turn over thousands of documents to us. If one of you was late, that's one thing, but the fact that you're all holding back tells us someone has invoked the cone of silence.

Do we need to bring another contempt motion to find out what you're hiding this time? Didn't you learn anything over the last year? Why won't you tell us the real cost of cancelling Oakville? I know why; those missing documents will tell us why.

Will you turn over the files today or are you going to let this Premier repeat history: throw you under the bus, with you found in contempt of this House?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** To the government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** This is a matter that should be dealt with by the committee, but if the honourable member wants to bring it to the floor of the Legislature,

then I will answer it. The simple fact is that the committee asked—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Not good enough. Carry on.

**Hon. John Milloy:** The committee asked the ministry and the Ontario Power Authority to undertake very, very extensive searches for the documents that both organizations have been forthcoming in the past. My understanding is they have spent over \$1 million in the searches they have already done for the committee, and they are still in the process of following up on the most current request.

They have been in communication with the committee. They have outlined the steps they are taking and they are working around the clock in order to produce the documents that the committee has asked for. There have been tens of thousands of documents provided by this government, and I think this is a matter for continual discussion—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

### CONDOMINIUM LEGISLATION

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** My question is to the Premier. The government's condo act review panel released its second report yesterday. There's some progress, but for condo owners looking for a quick and cheap way to settle a dispute, their recommendations come up short.

The report sets up a condo office to hear disputes. If it's a small matter, the case goes to a quick decision-maker and it gets settled—so far, so good—but if it's a big matter, then it goes to a dispute resolution office, lawyers are welcome, and all you get is an assessment; no settlement. And if your dispute is with a developer, the report says, "The present model works reasonably well." In other words, you're on your own, and good luck in court.

This process continues to work well for consultants, lawyers and developers but not for condo owners. Will the government put condo owners first?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know the Minister of Consumer Services is going to want to comment in the supplementary, but I just want to make a comment because I want to first of all thank the member opposite for raising this issue. It's something that many of us—I would say all of us—in government hear about: the concerns of condominium owners and, in that sector, the need for changes to the Condominium Act. So I'm very pleased that the member opposite raised the issue.

I'm very pleased that we have had the opportunity to put in place a very innovative, I would suggest, and comprehensive consultation process, because it's complex. It's a complex issue how the act should change and what's in the best interest of the people who live in condominiums in all of our constituencies. I'm very pleased that that process is under way, and I look forward to

working with the member opposite to get some resolution for condominium owners.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Speaker, the report says condo owners should pay a levy of up to \$36 a year to support the condo office, plus user fees. With 600,000 condo units, this office would cost condo owners over \$21 million a year. This is about the same net cost as the Landlord and Tenant Board, but when you go to that board, your disputes get settled quickly and cheaply. This condo office settles the same, the small stuff, but for everything else, it just adds a new process. And when it's over, you're still looking at mediation and arbitration, and then the courts.

If condo owners must pay the same cost as the Landlord and Tenant Board, shouldn't they get a condo tribunal that can settle all their disputes like the Landlord and Tenant Board?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Consumer Services.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I too want to thank the member opposite for the question. I know he's a strong advocate for this file.

I'm very pleased to inform the member in the House that stage two of the condo report review was released yesterday by the Public Policy Forum. I was absolutely thrilled to attend the residents' panel final meeting this past weekend, where they endorsed, in large measure, this concept of a condo office.

I know the member opposite is talking about some sort of tribunal. The notion of a condo office, as recommended in the report, is to address dispute resolution and many other aspects of condominium living, such as the education and training—potentially, licensing—of property managers.

I think it's important that we all have a look at the report. It's up for a 45-day review by the public. I'm very pleased that so many stakeholders—condo owners, residents and lawyers—have been involved.

## IMMIGRATION FRANCOPHONE

## FRANCOPHONE IMMIGRATION

**Mr. John Fraser:** Ma question s'adresse au ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration. Nous savons tous que l'Ontario représente la plus grande communauté francophone au Canada hors Québec. Ma circonscription d'Ottawa-Sud est le foyer de l'une des communautés francophones les plus fortes et dynamiques.

This past June, the 38th annual Franco-Ontarian festival was held to celebrate Franco-Ontarian culture. This week-long festival is one of the largest of its kind. Through live music, street art and dance, this festival celebrates the more than 600,000 francophone community members living across this province.

I was pleased to recently learn about our new website, funded through your ministry, providing French-speaking

people around the globe information about the benefits of working and living in Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: Could you please tell us more about this great new initiative from our government?

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** I want to thank the honourable member for his question and once again congratulate him on his recent election to this House.

At the Association of Francophone Municipalities of Ontario conference in West Nipissing, I announced that our government is making it easier for municipalities to meet demographic challenges and attract skilled francophone newcomers to help grow their communities. The new francophone Municipal Immigration Information Online portal provides detailed information and tools to help attract francophone immigrants and help them settle here in the province of Ontario.

This new web portal was built in partnership with 18 municipalities across this great province. Through the portal, we're also helping francophones in Ontario make online connections to find jobs in their communities. This initiative will help us meet our 5% target for francophone immigration laid out by the Ontario immigration strategy.

The development of this portal is part of Ontario's \$1.3-million investment in the Municipal Immigration Information Online Program, referred to as MIIO.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John Fraser:** Thank you, Minister. This is a great initiative that will help our francophone communities flourish. I know this will make a difference in helping municipalities attract skilled francophones to meet the needs of their community.

As we know, Ontario has a rich francophone history, which helps make Ontario the vibrant cultural mosaic that it is today. Les francophones en Ontario représentent 4,8 % de la population totale de la province. Comme dans la population générale de l'Ontario, la communauté franco-ontarienne est diverse et dynamique. Depuis plusieurs années, nous avons accueilli des immigrants venus d'Afrique, d'Asie, du Moyen-Orient et de l'Europe.

Monsieur le Président, par votre entremise, je demande au ministre: quoi d'autre est-ce que le ministère des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration de l'Ontario fait pour soutenir nos communautés francophones?

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** Mr. Speaker, once again I'd like to thank the member for his question and his championing of francophone culture here in this province.

Our government is committed to achieving the goals of the immigration strategy, one of them being to position newcomers here in the province so that they can be successful. Specifically, we're investing in French-language services for newcomers because we know they need these skills to succeed in their new work environments and better integrate into their communities.

In addition to tuition-free language services in 2013-14, our ministry has doubled its support to francophone settlement service providers. Some key services that we



help fund here in the province are settlement counselling; guidance and assistance with immigration and transition issues; translation; and workshops on a broad range of settlement-related issues. We want Ontario's franco-phone newcomers, current and future, to succeed, and we know that they will strengthen Ontario's vibrant communities and help contribute to our province's economic prosperity.

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#### AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

**Mr. Frank Klees:** To the Minister of Health: Just after midnight on August 29, Thunder Airlines, under contract to Ornge to provide air ambulance service, was dispatched to Pikangikum First Nation. That was a Code 4.

When that crew landed, an Air Bravo aircraft, also under contract to Ornge, was already there with two Ornge paramedics. Air Bravo could not transfer that patient because the satellite telephone was not functioning. The patient, along with the Ornge medics, was flown to Thunder Bay, where the patient was eventually admitted. The delay was extensive.

Is the minister aware of this incident, and can she tell us what the outcome was for that patient?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, I can tell you that Ornge is committed to providing the highest possible quality of care in Pikangikum and elsewhere across this whole province. I can tell you that the new leadership in Ornge is really focusing on measuring and improving the care they provide, and I can assure you that every effort is made to provide the highest quality care in every case.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Apparently the minister knows nothing about it.

I can tell the minister that that patient died. I can also tell the minister that it is alleged that the reason the Air Bravo satellite telephone was not working was because Air Bravo had not paid its bills. I can also tell the minister that the CEO of Air Bravo admitted under testimony last week that the company was having serious financial difficulties.

I can also tell the minister that Ornge failed, when issuing a contract to Air Bravo, to conduct any financial inspection of that company to determine whether it had the capacity to deliver.

I'd like to ask the minister this question: After everything we have heard about the lack of oversight on the part of the ministry and on the part of Ornge over the work that has to be done to deliver safe, secure, reliable air ambulance, why, over this number of months, do we still have to hear about incidents like this?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I know the member opposite would be interested in hearing some of the quality metrics and results at Ornge. From January to March this year, Ornge pilots were available to respond to calls 97% of the time. Ornge aircraft were in service 99% of the time. Ornge paramedics were available to respond to

calls 95% of the time. Ninety-six per cent of patient transports between health facilities are confirmed within 20 minutes, and 90% of Ornge's patient transports from emergencies are confirmed within 10 minutes.

Ornge is focusing on measuring the quality of care. The nature of the work in emergency medicine and emergency services is that there will always be cases. What is important to me is that Ornge, under the new leadership of Dr. McCallum, is measuring and reporting on quality metrics. That's a big—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

#### COMMUNITY SAFETY

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** My question is to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Leading up to the Pan Am Games, this government made a regulation under the Private Security and Investigative Services Act that effectively allows security guards to act as police officers until March 31, 2016. This regulation didn't come to the House for debate, but was instead quietly filed in the Gazette, much like the laws enacted during the G20 fiasco in Toronto in 2010.

Has this government learned nothing from the G20 about the consequences of enacting secret regulations? Minister, will you explain to Ontarians why this regulation to give security guards the same duties as police officers was passed in secret and without appropriate public input and debate?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I want to thank the member for her question. As you know, the health and safety of those athletes and those who will come to the Pan Am Games in 2015—we wanted to ensure that they will be safe, that the athletes will have a wonderful experience. We are, as we speak, and we have been for some time—we have a committee that has been put together, headed by the OPP, to make sure that the athletes and the people who will attend the games will be safe.

I have full confidence that this group is working well together and will make sure that every safety measure will be put in place for the safety of all of those who will come to the Pan Am Games.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** After what happened during the G20, Ontarians are rightly concerned about the potential for serious civil liberty abuses when those responsible for security are not fully briefed on the limits of their powers. The changes proposed to prevent the abuses that happened during the G20 in Toronto are still being debated in this House. In the absence of new legislative protections, how will the minister ensure that the appropriate training and safeguards are in place to prevent security guards from misinterpreting their new-found powers during the Pan Am Games, so we can prevent the kind of civil liberty violations we saw during the G20?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** This is an excellent question. Yes, we will be hiring security guards, and they will be under the direction of the police. I'm pleased that we

have added in the contract that they will have to hire new security guards from our colleges, so this is part of our youth strategy, to find jobs for our youths. The number one priority will be that these security guards will be well trained and they will know exactly what will be their responsibility.

You know, there's nothing that has been passed in secret. Regulations don't come to the House. This has been posted on the website for 30 days. So we have been very clear and very open. We have a lot of police forces that—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

### AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** My question is for the Premier and the Minister of Agriculture and Food. Across the province, people are very excited about the government's local food strategy. In my great riding of Oak Ridges–Markham, we are fortunate to have so many opportunities to shop for local foods. The Holland Marsh is right next door, and the Stouffville market, and many other farm markets offer the chance to purchase local produce and support local producers.

I know that the budget included a commitment to develop a Local Food Fund. Could the Premier and Minister of Agriculture and Food please update the House on this commitment?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you to the member for Oak Ridges–Markham for this question. I think that the issues around local food are of concern to everyone in this Legislature. They are issues that are very important to the agri-food sector, but they're important economic issues, because the reality is that a local food initiative can spur the agri-food economy and can help expand the agri-food economy.

I was very pleased to join folks at FoodShare last week to announce the Local Food Fund. It's a \$30-million fund that, over three years, will allow for investment in the kinds of initiatives that will raise awareness about local food and will actually help farmers and food processors to be able to find markets and to expand their businesses. We know that if we support Ontario farmers and if we support Ontario food processors, it's good for people's nutrition and it's good for the food that we eat—good for us and what we eat—but it's also good for local and regional economies.

1120

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** Thank you to the Premier and Minister of Agriculture and Food for the update. My constituents will be excited to hear that our Local Food Fund is now up and running and that your ministry is now accepting applications. In my community, the local food movement is strong, and consumers flock to our farm markets. I am fortunate enough to represent a riding that has both urban and rural roots, and I know that my constituents will have questions about the fund.

Can the Premier and Minister of Agriculture and Food provide more details on the fund and the type of projects it aims to support?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The member from Oak Ridges–Markham comments on the rural and urban nature of her riding, and I think that one of the things about this discussion is that we are so interconnected. The notion that somehow rural Ontario and urban Ontario are separate entities is just not the case.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Exactly: one Ontario.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** My colleague the Minister of Rural Affairs talks about one Ontario, and that is exactly the case; we are one Ontario.

The Local Food Fund is designed to help producers, people who run restaurants and other interested parties support regional and local food networks to enhance technologies and capacities in order to grow and provide minor capital in order for businesses to grow; to foster research and best practices and share those best practices; and to invest in education and outreach so that everyone in the province understands how local food can be accessed and why it's so important to do so.

### MANUFACTURING JOBS

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** My question is for the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. More than five months ago, we learned that the A.O. Smith plant in Fergus would cease manufacturing, putting 350 people out of work. I called upon the government to help our community with training and economic development support. In response, the government promised an action centre to support the displaced workers and help them find jobs. That action centre is having an open house today.

Will the minister explain to this House why it took him more than five months to open an action centre to help these A.O. Smith workers?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I'm happy to. We respond within a matter of hours when these layoff notices are given. We respond by contacting the municipality, and we did in that case; we've been working very closely with the mayor and the municipality. We respond by contacting the employer. We respond by contacting the workers and their representatives. We don't take unilateral action and step on the toes of all of the other people in those local communities; we work with them.

There are times when our intentions or our offers to set up things like an action centre are taken into consideration by those on the ground locally and implemented at the time that meets their needs. That's the case here. We're always there. We're always available. We're always ready to respond. We'll work with that community as best we can to respond to this challenge.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Minister, don't you dare blame my constituents for your own delays. That is totally unacceptable.



In 2005, eight years ago and before the recession hit, I called upon the Liberal government to have an all-party committee of this Legislature investigate our industrial competitiveness with a view to developing an action plan to protect manufacturing jobs in the province. The Liberals' inaction and indifference have directly contributed to the loss of 300,000 manufacturing jobs in this province. Even when a plant like A.O. Smith closes, displaced workers wait more than five months for the support that they need.

The Premier now says that she will focus on job creation and the economy. In light of their disastrous record on jobs, how can the people of Ontario see any light at the end of the tunnel as long as these Liberals remain in power?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Minister.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Minister of Economic Development.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I, in fact, take offence to what the member opposite just—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I think we've started shouting people down again.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** He was shouting at us, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I will talk to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke in a calm manner and tell him that this is not enough.

Minister.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I think I have to repeat that I take offence at what the member opposite has just said, because he knows well the number of conversations that the two of us have had, not just specifically about A.O. Smith, but also the efforts that I've been making in terms of meeting repeatedly with the local leadership, with the businesses in the area. I've been working hard with the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund. In fact, we've made a number of announcements that directly and positively impact the people in the area and the people who are affected by the closure of the Fergus plant. I met with AMO; I met with the local leadership as well.

I think he should talk to the mayor, because she is quite satisfied with the efforts that this government is making to address the issues with A.O. Smith as well as the job opportunities and job challenges that are faced by the local leadership there.

He knows well the efforts that I've been making and the announcements that we're hoping will come forward in the foreseeable future that will benefit the people of that important part of the province.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** My question is to the Premier. This Liberal government is so focused on sticking Ontarians with the bill for more transit promises in the GTA that it seems to have forgotten that commuters depend on buses and trains to get them to work in regions like Niagara, where I live. It's bad enough that the Conservatives in Ottawa have slashed our Via Rail service in our community, but it's even harder for the people who live in Niagara to understand why this government keeps wavering on the GO train service.

Why won't the government publicly commit to a date for year-round, all-day GO to St. Catharines and Niagara Falls and stick to it?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I am absolutely committed, and we have expanded GO service across the GTHA. The member opposite knows perfectly well that we have done that and that we have expanded GO service into Niagara.

The reality is that the member opposite raises a very important issue, and that is that we need to have an integrated transportation plan that includes the federal government, the provincial government and municipal governments, because the service that the member opposite references was a federal-level responsibility.

The fact is that at the Council of the Federation I have made it clear with my colleague Premiers that in order for us to have a coherent transportation network across this country we need the federal government to work with us. In the meantime, we will continue to expand GO service, as we've been doing for the last 10 years.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Niagara is filled with bedroom communities. People make a conscious choice not to move away from Niagara. They want to live where they live, and they need transit available to them. Crowded buses and intermittent train service is taking a toll on the quality of life for people who live in the Niagara region. The government keeps saying that it's going to put in this GO service all day, but it never mentions when.

Will the minister tell Niagara residents today when they will finally get the promise of daily GO train services they so badly need?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I appreciate the member opposite advocating for her community. My experience when I was Minister of Transportation—and I know there are other Ministers of Transportation who can attest to this—was that whenever we made an announcement about increased GO service, there was a brief moment of "That's great," and then the next expression was, "When can we have more?" because it is in such demand, it is such a good service and it provides such convenient and efficient transportation options for people.

GO is committed to two-way, all-day service on all corridors. The implementation is under way. We know there is increased demand for GO service, and that is, from my perspective, indicative of the culture shift that's happening in this province. People are looking at our

finite resources and saying, "You know what? We need to find ways to get out of our cars and get into transit." That's why we're committed to building this infrastructure, Mr. Speaker, and expanding service across the GTHA.

### GOVERNMENT SERVICES

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** My question is for the Minister of Government Services. I receive calls and inquiries from constituents on a daily basis on a variety of issues, including on accessing services provided by the provincial government. My constituents are hard-working men and women who lead busy lives. Commuting to and from work and taking care of young children or elderly family members are their priorities. Spending time to try to locate government services that they need should not be time-consuming. Providing efficient and easy access to government information and services has been a priority of this government.

Last year, the Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services provided recommendations on delivering more efficient methods of delivering services that Ontarians need and want.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister, can he please tell us about the ongoing work to fulfill this government's commitment to delivering services more effectively to all Ontarians?

1130

**Hon. John Milloy:** The member is quite right that people, with their busy lives, are looking for convenient ways to deal with the government, particularly to access a variety of services. ServiceOntario has as its mandate to try to make it as convenient as possible for people to deal with those services.

In fact, this morning I announced a new measure that's being brought forward by ServiceOntario: the fact that people can now renew their driver's licence online—a simple matter of going to our website, [serviceontario.ca](http://serviceontario.ca), and they'll be eligible to renew their driver's licence. Now, it's once every five years; with this, you can renew it once and will only have to go every 10 years in order to get an up-to-date photo.

This new service has been added to more than 40 services already available online, including birth certificates, marriage certificates, licence plate stickers and driver abstracts. Again, Mr. Speaker, it's a way of making people's lives easier.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** Thank you to the minister for his response. It is good to know that, through ServiceOntario and initiatives such as the online driver's licence renewal service, we are delivering on our commitment to make it easier for Ontarians to access the services they need, where and when they need them.

The people of Ontario expect their government to deliver quality services, including a range of service access options. In my riding of Scarborough-Rouge River, it is important that there is a driver in every house-

hold. At times, driving to and from a location is the only option. Spending time to renew a driver's licence can be time-consuming. We should be taking steps to help people get that done faster and more efficiently. My constituents will be glad to know that they can now renew their driver's licence online.

Speaker, through you to the minister, could he please inform this House on how the online driver's licence renewal service expedites the process?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Each year in Ontario, some 1.6 million Ontario drivers renew their driver's licence. Through this service, most of them will be eligible to do it from an Internet site, in their home or elsewhere. Eligible drivers will be able to go online, and the slogan we have is "Just click, renew and drive." After that, a new driver's licence will be mailed to the applicant, and will be valid for five years.

Ontario drivers who renew online will only need to go to a ServiceOntario centre every 10 years, as I mentioned previously, to have a new photo taken. Drivers will be notified if they need to go renew their licence in person because they have reached this time frame.

### ENDANGERED SPECIES

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. The MNR recently made changes to the Endangered Species Act which streamlined a number of provisions in the permitting process. That is why I was surprised to read the EBR posting for woodland caribou, yet another job-killing posting for northern Ontario.

It's very clear from the proposals in this posting that the socio-economic analysis was never done to determine the impact which they would have on a northern municipality's forestry and a wide range of stakeholders. Would the minister explain why these critical factors had not been taken into account before your ministry decided to kill more jobs?

**Hon. David Orazietti:** The member opposite knows full well that the government's position on this has been one of finding a balance to ensure that jobs in northern Ontario, and throughout the province, would be able to continue to thrive. I categorically reject the assertion that this is somehow outside of the regular process.

The member introduced a private member's bill some time ago to, in fact, gut the legislation, which is not something that we're prepared to do on this side of the House. We wanted to find the balance; we've struck the appropriate balance. We formed a committee and we had ample input from countless stakeholders.

What I can tell you, Speaker, is that the various groups and organizations were very supportive of the changes we made. Tom Laughren said, "This proposed regulation provides some much-needed balance to the implementation of the ESA" in the forestry industry. Russ Powers of the association of municipalities said, "The streamlined approach balances protecting endangered species with other priorities"—



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Well, I categorically reject that you care about jobs. Your ministry has failed to perform a socio-economic analysis, which my party would make mandatory. Some of those municipalities who will be impacted are doing their own analysis. In an August 13 letter to the Premier and to you, the town of Cochrane provides a detailed analysis of the impact that these proposals would have on the Abitibi River forest.

MNR proposals would require sacrificing half of the entire forest volume, which would be catastrophic. The impact on communities from North Bay to Hearst would be a loss of another 8,000 jobs, \$433 million in lost wages and a loss of \$273 million in lost taxes for the municipalities.

Minister, will you show that you care about the north and its people and withdraw those proposals?

**Hon. David Orazietti:** The member opposite—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated. We need quiet. I mean it.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Durham, come to order.

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** That's it; in your chair.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** And you're not supposed to be talking, minister responsible for seniors.

Answer, please.

**Hon. David Orazietti:** Thank you, Speaker. The member opposite knows, and she's referencing a plan from Cochrane—Mayor Politis, who is the Conservative candidate, so I take that with a grain of salt. But what I will say is that Jamie Lim, the president of the OFIA—here's what the forestry sector says: "A key component of this proposed legislation is the recognition by the government that forestry activities already provide for the protection of species at risk...." with regard to the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, "while also ensuring that economic development activities, such as forestry, will be allowed to proceed without unnecessary impacts."

It's quite clear that the forestry industry supports the changes we've made—it's very clear about that—and the plan that we have proposed and have implemented clearly recognizes that balance. I am somewhat concerned about the position of the NDP, because the opposition seems to be—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

## ÉDUCATION POSTSECONDAIRE DE LANGUE FRANÇAISE

### FRENCH-LANGUAGE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Merci, monsieur le Président, et j'aimerais vous souhaiter une bonne journée franco-

ontarienne. C'est une journée pour honorer le passé et célébrer l'avenir.

Ma question est pour la première ministre. Aujourd'hui, les jeunes Franco-Ontariens et Franco-Ontariennes du Sud-Ouest se demandent combien de temps ils devront attendre pour poursuivre leurs études en français. Ils et elles ont autant le droit d'accéder à une éducation postsecondaire en français que les gens du Nord, de l'Est ou du grand Toronto. Dans son rapport de 2012, le commissaire aux services en français a dit que le taux d'accès à l'éducation postsecondaire dans le Sud-Ouest est minime : de 0 % à 3 %. Moi, j'appelle ça quasi non existant.

Quand est-ce que le gouvernement va offrir de la formation collégiale et universitaire à la clientèle franco-ontarienne du sud-ouest de l'Ontario?

**L'hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Merci pour la question. J'ai parlé avec les étudiants qui ont besoin d'une éducation postsecondaire au sud de l'Ontario et je suis concernée que nous n'avons pas assez de programmes pour les étudiants. Pour moi, c'est très important que nous ayons des programmes. S'il est important ou nécessaire d'avoir un autre édifice, je ne sais pas. C'est une discussion que nous devons avoir, mais pour moi, c'est très important que nous ayons des programmes justes pour les étudiants au nord et au sud de l'Ontario.

**Le Président (L'hon. Dave Levac):** Merci. Question?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** C'est facile pour un gouvernement en cette journée franco-ontarienne d'offrir des belles paroles, de parler de sites Web, de culture, de chansons en français et de programmes d'éducation. Mais les actions parlent plus fort que les mots. Jusqu'à ce jour, le gouvernement en a fait si peu pour offrir des possibilités d'apprentissage postsecondaire dans le sud-ouest de l'Ontario.

Le commissaire aux services en français a présenté des pistes de solution. Les néo-démocrates en ont présentées plusieurs dans les communautés et à l'Assemblée législative, mais on dirait que le gouvernement libéral n'est pas à l'écoute, ou peut-être, monsieur le Président, c'est qu'ils ne nous comprennent pas.

Ma question est simple : quand est-ce que le gouvernement va offrir une gamme adéquate de programmes de formation postsecondaire et universitaire aux résidents du sud-ouest de l'Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** We've been working extremely close with RÉFO, who are the francophone students' representatives across this province. They've had an opportunity to meet with myself. I know the Premier has talked to some of those students across the province on many occasions. The minister of francophone affairs has been an incredible champion of this. We're not just talking, Mr. Speaker; we've taken action.

One of the things they asked for was an announcement of our travel grant to ensure that francophone students could take advantage of that grant even if there were services available within some of their communities.

That group of students was extremely pleased with the measures we've taken. But I can assure the member, as I've said to RÉFO for the great work that they've done, that we're working very closely with them and we are looking to move very quickly.

It is in our throne speech. We're going to take action to help ensure that francophone students get greater access to francophone courses in southwestern and central Ontario.

## DEFERRED VOTES

### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS AMENDMENT ACT

(LEAVES TO HELP FAMILIES), 2013

### LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES NORMES D'EMPLOI (CONGÉS POUR AIDER LES FAMILLES)

Deferred vote on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 21, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 in respect of family caregiver, critically ill child care and crime-related child death or disappearance leaves of absence / Projet de loi 21, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2000 sur les normes d'emploi en ce qui concerne le congé familial pour les aidants naturels, le congé pour soins à un enfant gravement malade et le congé en cas de décès ou de disparition d'un enfant dans des circonstances criminelles.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1142 to 1147.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On March 18, 2013, Mr. Naqvi moved second reading of Bill 21.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Elliott, Christine  
Fedeli, Victor  
Fife, Catherine  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Forster, Cindy  
Fraser, John  
Gerretsen, John  
Gélinas, France

McKenna, Jane  
McMeekin, Ted  
McNaughton, Monte  
McNeely, Phil  
Meilleur, Madeleine  
Miller, Norm  
Miller, Paul  
Milligan, Rob E.

Wilson, Jim  
Wong, Soo  
Wynne, Kathleen O.  
Yakubski, John  
Yurek, Jeff  
Zimmer, David

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 94; the nays are 0.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Shall the bill be ordered for third reading?

Minister of Labour?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I would ask that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on General Government.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** So ordered.

There are no more deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1151 to 1500.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** It's my pleasure to introduce Angela Kennedy, the Toronto Catholic District School Board trustee who covers my area. Welcome to the Legislature, Angela.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** It's a real pleasure for me today to introduce to the House two leaders in our francophone community in the town of Penetanguishene. They're leading a number of projects in the Franco-Ontarian celebration, and also in the 400th anniversary of the Samuel de Champlain project that we've got in our community: Anne and Yvon Gagné, from Penetanguishene. Thank you very much for being here, Anne and Yvon.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### INTERNATIONAL PLOWING MATCH

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Today I want to pay tribute to everyone who worked so hard to put the 2013 International Plowing Match and Rural Expo together. Perth county was privileged to host this year, the 100th anniversary year of the very first plowing match.

"Come Celebrate with Us" was the theme. People from across Ontario and beyond came out to celebrate, and with good reason. The IPM is a window into the very best of our history and the best of our future. It showcases the very best in agriculture, rural Ontario and its people.

### Ayes

Albanese, Laura  
Arnott, Ted  
Bailey, Robert  
Balkissoon, Bas  
Barrett, Toby  
Bartolucci, Rick  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bisson, Gilles  
Bradley, James J.  
Campbell, Sarah  
Chan, Michael  
Chiarelli, Bob  
Chudleigh, Ted  
Clark, Steve  
Colle, Mike  
Coteau, Michael  
Crack, Grant  
Damerla, Dipika  
Del Duca, Steven  
Dhillon, Vic  
Dickson, Joe  
DiNovo, Cheri  
Duguid, Brad  
Dunlop, Garfield

Gravelle, Michael  
Hardeman, Ernie  
Harris, Michael  
Hillier, Randy  
Holaday, Douglas C.  
Hoskins, Eric  
Hudak, Tim  
Hunter, Mitzie  
Jackson, Rod  
Jaczek, Helena  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Jones, Sylvia  
Klees, Frank  
Kwinter, Monte  
Leal, Jeff  
Leone, Rob  
MacCharles, Tracy  
MacLaren, Jack  
Mangat, Amrit  
Mantha, Michael  
Marchese, Rosario  
Matthews, Deborah  
Mauro, Bill  
McDonnell, Jim

Milloy, John  
Moridi, Reza  
Munro, Julia  
Naqvi, Yasir  
Nicholls, Rick  
O'Toole, John  
Oraziotti, David  
Ouellette, Jerry J.  
Pettapiece, Randy  
Piruzza, Teresa  
Prue, Michael  
Sandals, Liz  
Sattler, Peggy  
Schein, Jonah  
Scott, Laurie  
Sergio, Mario  
Shurman, Peter  
Singh, Jagmeet  
Smith, Todd  
Sousa, Charles  
Tabuns, Peter  
Taylor, Monique  
Thompson, Lisa M.  
Vanthof, John



This year was no exception. Here are just a few of the highlights: the opening day parade; the plowing competition, including teams from Quebec and the United States, made this truly an International Plowing Match; the annual Queen of the Furrow competition, in which 29 accomplished women vied for the title; a performance by the royal Canadian Snowbirds; and—

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** And Team Farmall.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** —and Team Farmall's dancing tractors.

The organizers of the IPM did a tremendous job. Bert Vorstenbosch and the entire executive committee, including Ron McKay, Larry Cook, Dianne Josling, Coralee Foster and Laverne Gordner deserve enormous credit for their leadership.

I also want to thank the Van Nuland family for hosting the tented city, and all of the landowners for the use of their land. Also, thank you to Mayor McKenzie, the council at West Perth and municipal staff for their leadership and support.

The IPM was a community effort. It could not have been possible without the more than 1,500 people who volunteered for the IPM. Those volunteers are the strength of the community we see day in and day out in Perth–Wellington. Mr. Speaker, that is truly something worth celebrating today, tomorrow and for the next 100 years.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Man, can those tractors dance.

#### INJURED WORKERS' CONSULTANTS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I stand here today in support of the Injured Workers' Consultants, a community legal clinic in my riding. The clinic was established in 1969 by representatives of the injured worker community to provide legal advice, representation, education, research and advocacy on law and policy reform issues.

In 2004, a value-for-money audit done by the Attorney General recommended amalgamation and centralization of the clinic offices and the elimination of independent community boards of directors. This government has never disassociated itself from those recommendations.

What makes this legal clinic work so well is its community board. The clinic's independence is a critical strength and requirement. It appears that the Liberal government is moving to centralize the functions of this clinic and others like it, which would remove community control.

This is an attack on the fundamental principles of the community clinic system. Ontarians deserve fair access to justice, and community-based clinics are a fundamental part of that fair access. I am asking this government to guarantee that this denial of access to justice will not happen.

#### JOUR DES FRANCO-ONTARIENS ET DES FRANCO-ONTARIENNES

**M. Phil McNeely:** Je me joins aujourd'hui à ma collègue et ministre responsable de la francophonie, Madeleine Meilleur, et à tous les francophones et francophiles de l'Ontario pour souligner le Jour des Franco-Ontariens et des Franco-Ontariennes.

Nous nous souvenons tous du 26 avril 2010. C'est en cette journée mémorable que cette Assemblée législative a voté à l'unanimité l'adoption de la Loi sur le Jour des Franco-Ontariens et des Franco-Ontariennes, loi qui a proclamé le 25 septembre de chaque année le Jour des Franco-Ontariens et des Franco-Ontariennes en Ontario.

Je suis fier de représenter la circonscription d'Ottawa–Orléans depuis 10 ans, laquelle constitue la plus grande communauté francophone hors Québec.

Merci à tous ceux et celles qui ont levé et lèveront fièrement le drapeau franco-ontarien aujourd'hui. Il fut d'ailleurs hissé pour la première fois à Sudbury le 25 septembre 1975. Je tiens donc à remercier l'équipe créatrice de ce symbole de la francophonie ontarienne : M. Gaétan Gervais; Jacqueline England, qui a cousu le drapeau; Michel Dupuis, Don Obonsawin et Yves Tassé.

#### CAREER COLLEGES

**Mr. Rob Leone:** I rise to acknowledge career colleges day at Queen's Park and to lend my support to an industry that's providing the training today for the jobs of tomorrow.

What many people don't know is that career colleges have a long history in Ontario. In fact, the first private career college was set up in the 19th century.

These educational institutions often offer what the traditional college and university systems cannot. Career colleges are well equipped to provide workers with the kind of intensive training and retraining that people may need if their current employment terminates. As our economy adapts over time, skill requirements change, plants close and jobs are often lost. Career colleges are perfectly positioned to help Ontarians adapt to these changes as quickly as possible.

From fashion and beauty to the culinary arts, from truck driving to pre-apprenticeship training, career colleges offer a number of different career paths for students. They often cater to a student body that is older on average than students who attend university or college. The reason career colleges are able to provide training so efficiently is because they're often successful and nimble small businesses that fill a crucial market need for timely training.

I encourage all members of this House to take the time today to learn about what career colleges can offer to their communities, our province and its workforce.

## AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Speaker, as you're well aware, we have raised several questions to the government with regard to our budget demand for car insurance reductions of 15%. The Premier has continued to avoid the question, but instead has tried to justify the reasoning for increases that people have seen.

New Democrats made it quite clear that the people of this province are paying the highest rates of insurance in the entire country, and they deserve a break. That was the message I heard loud and clear from the people of Hamilton Mountain. I heard from many people that auto insurance costs were unmanageable. One 15% reduction would not change their lives, but it would definitely help. When the budget passed, they were looking forward to it. Instead, many people have been calling my office to tell me that their premiums continue to rise, in one case as much as 40%, and that's with a clean record.

One family contacted me to state that they had just moved into my riding, and that move alone cost them \$150 extra per month on their auto insurance. Others report substantial increases when they haven't moved or bought a new car; they just renewed their insurance.

It's time for the government to listen to the people of Ontario and act now to fulfill their promise to cut auto insurance in Ontario by 15%.

## TRANSIT ACCIDENT IN OTTAWA

**Mr. John Fraser:** Last week's tragedy has deeply affected everyone in my hometown of Ottawa. I would like to extend our deepest condolences to the six families that lost loved ones. To those injured and affected, we hope for a speedy recovery. You all remain in our thoughts and prayers.

I would also like to take a moment on behalf of the community of Ottawa South to say thank you to all those who came to the aid of the injured and affected.

1510

To Ottawa's first responders—police, firefighters and paramedics—thank you for your professionalism and courage on the scene. To the doctors, nurses, social workers, technicians and all the staff at the Ottawa, Montfort and Queensway Carleton hospitals, thank you for being ready to tend to people's injuries and needs within minutes of the news and for the compassionate care that you provided. Thank you to everyone in our community who comforted individuals and families affected by this tragedy, and I know the member from Nepean—Carleton was doing that this week.

I know that all of my colleagues in this Legislature from Ottawa are proud of our community's response and thankful to all those on the ground who were there for their friends and neighbours.

## YUREK PHARMACY

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** In 1963, using money that he saved and borrowed from his family, my father took a chance and opened a small-town independent pharmacy. Over the years, he poured his heart and soul into Yurek Pharmacy and successfully grew the business through a deep and abiding commitment to customer service. As the pharmacy grew, it became a St. Thomas landmark rooted in the community through its contributions to local sports teams, charities and, of course, its dedication to customer service.

I want to commend my father as tomorrow marks the 50th anniversary of Yurek Pharmacy. His dedication to the profession has rubbed off on me, my brother Peter and my sister Diane, as we all became pharmacists.

Yurek Pharmacy stands as an example of what's possible through hard work, dedication and vision. Today our family pharmacy is not only in St. Thomas but has expanded to include two locations in London, and we employ over 110 people. Our continued success is attributable to the pharmacy's commitment to our father's original philosophy of customer service.

We have enjoyed the past 50 years, and I look forward to the next 50.

## GLOBAL CITIES INSTITUTE

**Ms. Mitzie Hunter:** Earlier this month, I had the privilege of being invited to the Global Cities Institute launch at the University of Toronto, my alma mater. The Global Cities Institute was created at the University of Toronto to build on the strengths of a rapidly expanding global network of scholars, city leaders, design and planning professionals, key international organizations, foundations and industry innovators dedicated to securing a better future for cities.

I know from the experience I've had working in my community of Scarborough-Guildwood that organizations that acknowledge and take advantage of the growing impact of the international community are so important to the growth of our city and our province. I have lived, learned and worked in Scarborough, and what makes it such an amazing and unique place is its diversity.

The Global Cities Institute seeks to prepare the future of our workforce for the influx of international influence here in Toronto. It is something my constituents, as well as the people of Ontario, can benefit from. At the Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference, Premier Wynne stated that decisions based on evidence are the best decisions.

Copies of the Global Cities Institute's most recent report on aging demographics in cities can be obtained by contacting my office, and we will also leave copies in each caucus office later this week.



## ALGONQUIN LAND CLAIM

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Speaker, the governments of Canada and Ontario are currently in negotiations with the Algonquins of Ontario to resolve a land claim which affects my riding of Nipissing. People in my riding, including landowners and the Algonquin First Nations, remain upset over the lack of consultation and answers they have received when the agreement in principle was released last December. There are a number of key areas where concerns have arisen in my riding: Camp Island, the Mattawa River Provincial Park and a parcel called 302B, just to name a few.

The township of East Ferris passed a resolution on August 13 of this year expressing their concerns over how the agreement in principle could affect potential development along the shoreline of Trout Lake, the source of the city of North Bay's drinking water. There were resolution requests, "That all crown lands within 300 metres of Trout Lake, including the lands along designated inflowing water courses, be excluded from the crown land transfer to the Algonquins of Ontario."

Speaker, I met with the chief negotiator here in my office recently, and some minor changes have been made affecting the parcels in Nipissing. Residents will be notified by letter in the next couple of weeks.

I will continue to work to ensure the concerns of all sides are addressed and resolved in a satisfactory manner.

## TRANSIT ACCIDENT IN OTTAWA

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** A point of order from the member from Nepean–Carleton.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Thank you very much, Speaker. A week ago today, I took leave from this place as a result of a bus-and-train crash on Fallowfield which was right behind my constituency office. At the time, I had notified the chamber that five of my constituents had passed away. Unfortunately, the next day we learned that one more person would lose their life in that bus tragedy.

I would just like to say thank you to all of my colleagues. We were very touched in Nepean–Carleton that you lowered the flag to half-staff and, while I was on the road, on my way home to my constituents, that you had taken a moment of silence on their behalf.

I can tell you that the first responders in Nepean–Carleton and in all the city of Ottawa were so quick that they were at the accident within six minutes. The trauma units at the Ottawa Hospital, which is both the civic and the general campuses, as well as the Montfort Hospital and the Queensway Carleton Hospital, were so outstanding. Speaker, that while we were dealing with the tragedy, we had confidence and comfort in knowing that our emergency services were there for us when we needed them.

This past week and next week will be very tough as we say goodbye to those who lost their lives. I was fortunate that the city of Ottawa has been including me in all of their delegations and official bodies to these funerals.

I just want to say, on behalf of the people I represent and the people who we've lost, thank you to my colleagues for their comfort and understanding in this past week, and particularly to my colleagues who have taken on extra duties in my absence. Thank you.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Wonderfully expressed, and I thank the member from Nepean–Carleton for that.

In accordance with unanimous consent that was agreed upon this morning, we will move reports by committees after petitions.

It is now time for introduction of bills.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES AMENDMENT ACT (FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES COMMISSIONER), 2013

### LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS (COMMISSAIRE AUX SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS)

Madame Meilleur moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 106, An Act to amend the French Language Services Act with respect to the French Language Services Commissioner / *Projet de loi 106, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services en français en ce qui concerne le commissaire aux services en français.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Point of order, Mr. Speaker?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm in the middle of this process, and I will see to that after.

The member for a short statement.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I'll make my statement during ministers' statements.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Nickel Belt on a point of order.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Je crois que nous avons le consentement unanime pour la deuxième lecture du projet de loi modifiant la Loi sur les services en français, pour le commissaire aux services en français, et de mettre immédiatement la question sur ce projet de loi afin que nous puissions le renvoyer au comité.

To help out, I believe we have unanimous consent to call second reading of the French Language Services Amendment Act (French Language Services Commissioner), 2013, and immediately put the question on the bill so that it can be referred to committee.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You might not believe this, but I was actually following, and I was ready to respond to that—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** —but not en français.

The member from Nickel Belt has asked for unanimous consent to put the question. Do we have agreement on unanimous consent? Agreed.

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Je voudrais souligner la présence du commissaire aux services en français, M. François Boileau, qui est ici.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Madame Meilleur moves second reading of Bill 106. Madame Meilleur.

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Merci. Je m'excuse si j'étais trop inspirée.

Puis aussi M. Guy Matte, qui est le président du comité aviseur aux services en français, et M. Denis Vaillancourt, le président de l'AFO. Tous les Ontariens et Ontariennes célèbrent aujourd'hui—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You've got to move second reading.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Okay, I have to move second reading. Agreed?

FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES  
AMENDMENT ACT  
(FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES  
COMMISSIONER), 2013

LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT  
LA LOI SUR LES SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS  
(COMMISSAIRE AUX SERVICES  
EN FRANÇAIS)

Madame Meilleur moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 106, An Act to amend the French Language Services Act with respect to the French Language Services Commissioner / Projet de loi 106, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services en français en ce qui concerne le commissaire aux services en français.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I would like to know to which committee the minister would like the bill referred.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I want to refer it to the committee on the Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** So ordered.

FAIR HIRING TO SUPPORT TEACHERS,  
PARENTS AND STUDENTS ACT, 2013

LOI DE 2013 SUR LES PRATIQUES  
D'ENGAGEMENT ÉQUITABLES  
À L'APPUI DES ENSEIGNANTS,  
DES PARENTS ET DES ÉLÈVES

Ms. MacLeod moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 107, An Act to amend the Education Act with respect to hiring practices for teachers / Projet de loi 107, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'éducation en ce qui concerne les pratiques d'engagement des enseignants.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

Opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

There are five members standing. Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1522 to 1527.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Will members take their seats, please.

Ms. MacLeod has moved An Act to amend the Education Act with respect to hiring practices for teachers.

Please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

**Ayes**

Albanese, Laura	Fedeli, Victor	McNeely, Phil
Arnott, Ted	Fraser, John	Meilleur, Madeleine
Bailey, Robert	Hardeman, Ernie	Miller, Norm
Balkissoon, Bas	Harris, Michael	Milligan, Rob E.
Barrett, Toby	Holyday, Douglas C.	Milloy, John
Bartolucci, Rick	Hunter, Mitzie	Moridi, Reza
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jaczek, Helena	Munro, Julia
Chan, Michael	Jeffrey, Linda	Nicholls, Rick
Chiarelli, Bob	Jones, Sylvia	O'Toole, John
Chudleigh, Ted	Klees, Frank	Pettapiece, Randy
Clark, Steve	Leone, Rob	Piruzza, Teresa
Colle, Mike	MacCharles, Tracy	Scott, Laurie
Crack, Grant	MacLaren, Jack	Sergio, Mario
Damerla, Dipika	MacLeod, Lisa	Thompson, Lisa M.
Del Duca, Steven	Mangat, Amrit	Walker, Bill
Dhillon, Vic	Matthews, Deborah	Wilson, Jim
Duguid, Brad	McDonell, Jim	Wong, Soo
Dunlop, Garfield	McKenna, Jane	Yakubskij, John
Elliott, Christine	McMeekin, Ted	Yurek, Jeff

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

**Nays**

Bisson, Gilles	Forster, Cindy
DiNovo, Cheri	Gélinas, France

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 57; the nays are 4.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a brief statement.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** This is the Fair Hiring to Support Teachers, Parents and Students Act, 2013.

I'd like to first acknowledge two people here from the Toronto school boards: Angela Kennedy as well as Howard Goodman, and Doretta Wilson, who's here from education quality of Ontario.

This bill revokes Ontario regulation 24/12 on hiring practices made under the Education Act, and amends the act to provide that no regulation can be made under the



act if it uses a person's seniority as an occasional teacher as a factor to rank the person for assignment or appointment to a position as a teacher, and if the factor is accorded greater weight than any other factor, such as the person's teaching qualifications.

The bill also amends the act to require every school board to establish a policy for assigning or appointing persons to a position as a teacher. The policy prohibits a board from deciding to assign or appoint a person to a position as a teacher if the board, in making the decision, accords greater weight to nepotism than to any other factor, such as a person's teaching qualifications. Regulations made under the act can define the meaning of the term "nepotism."

Speaker, given what I have just seen, I'm wondering if I could appeal for unanimous consent for second reading of the bill.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Nepean–Carleton is seeking unanimous consent for second reading. Is it the pleasure of the House? Agreed?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Listen: It doesn't matter how much goes back and forth; I have to finish my script too.

Do we agree? Thank you. I heard a no.

#### TRANSPARENCY IN MEMBERS' EXPENSES ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 SUR LA TRANSPARENCE EN MATIÈRE DES DÉPENSES DES DÉPUTÉS

Mr. Fraser moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 108, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Act/ Projet de loi 108, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Assemblée législative.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. John Fraser:** The Transparency in Members' Expenses Act is an act to increase transparency and open government with respect to members' expenses.

#### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

#### SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS FRENCH-LANGUAGE SERVICES

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Aujourd'hui, je suis très heureuse d'être ici accompagnée de beaucoup de francophones qui ont joué un rôle et qui continuent à jouer un rôle important dans la communauté francophone et je veux les remercier pour tout l'appui qu'ils m'ont donné depuis les derniers 10 ans.

Tous les Ontariens et Ontariennes célèbrent aujourd'hui le Jour des Franco-Ontariens et des Franco-Ontariennes.

Mes collègues à l'Assemblée se souviendront que la date du 25 septembre avait été adoptée par l'Assemblée législative en 2010 pour souligner les contributions présentes et passées de la communauté franco-ontarienne.

At a time when so many governments and states in the world are facing issues related to social harmony and inclusion, I feel tremendously proud to be a member of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario today.

Ici en Ontario, nous avons fait le pari que le respect de la langue, de la religion et de la diversité favorise toujours la progression et le développement de notre société. Et en ce jour symbolique, notre province forme une seule et grande famille qui célèbre l'un de ses peuples fondateurs, le peuple franco-ontarien.

Je suis particulièrement heureuse de me lever aujourd'hui parce que nous avons choisi cette journée festive pour présenter un nouveau projet de loi modifiant la Loi sur les services en français de manière à renforcer davantage la prestation des services en français en Ontario. Ce projet d'amendement législatif aura une incidence systémique sur l'efficacité de l'application de la loi, aujourd'hui et à l'avenir.

This bill, Mr. Speaker, is designed to make the French Language Services Commissioner fully independent by making the commissioner an officer reporting directly to the Legislative Assembly.

Bien sûr, notre gouvernement a accordé beaucoup d'indépendance d'action au commissaire actuel, au niveau de l'élaboration de ses rapports annuels et de ses enquêtes spéciales que j'ai déposés en son nom à l'Assemblée législative, au niveau de ses nombreuses interventions publiques, ses relations de travail avec les élus et les représentants du gouvernement, et dans l'ensemble de ses relations et contacts avec la communauté franco-ontarienne.

Je salue le commissaire, qui est parmi nous aujourd'hui, ainsi que tous les Franco-Ontariens et Franco-Ontariennes présents à l'Assemblée cet après-midi pour assister à cette journée historique. Je vous salue tous et toutes personnellement et je tiens aussi à mentionner la présence, parce que quand je l'ai mentionnée tantôt il n'était pas là, de M. Denis Vaillancourt, le président de l'Assemblée de la francophonie en Ontario.

Le commissaire actuel, qui a été hautement efficace, n'a jamais hésité à critiquer le gouvernement quand il percevait des manquements à la Loi sur les services en français.

Mais aujourd'hui, le gouvernement Wynne va plus loin.

En modifiant la Loi sur les services en français pour en faire un officier de l'Assemblée législative, nous allons reconnaître officiellement, ensemble, mesdames et messieurs les députés, notre responsabilité collective dans l'application et le respect de l'intégrité de la Loi sur les services en français.

Every member of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario will assume this important responsibility on behalf of Ontario francophones and everyone who appreciates Franco-Ontarian culture. If this bill passes, we, as MPPs, will receive the commissioner's recommendations directly.

Car celui-ci relèvera alors de l'Assemblée législative dans son ensemble, et non plus du ou de la ministre délégué(e) aux Affaires francophones. De plus, il aura ainsi le même statut que d'autres officiers de l'Assemblée comme, par exemple, le commissaire à l'environnement ou l'intervenant provincial en faveur des enfants et des jeunes.

Ensemble, nous pourrions débattre, ici même à l'Assemblée législative, des meilleurs objectifs et méthodes pour protéger et promouvoir la qualité des services publics en français en Ontario. Et ce sera inscrit dans la loi.

Mr. Speaker, the recommendation to make the commissioner an officer reporting to the Legislative Assembly is a logical, reasoned proposal from a government that is serious about francophone heritage and about the vitality of this province's community of 611,500 Franco-Ontarians.

Le gouvernement libéral, depuis 2003, relève déjà le défi constant du renforcement des services en français par l'entremise de nombreuses mesures adoptées depuis 10 ans. Il valorise la francophonie ontarienne pour en faire un outil de développement au service de la prospérité des Ontariennes et des Ontariens. Et ceci donne des résultats probants dont nous pouvons être très fiers.

Le commissariat aux services en français que le gouvernement a créé en 2007 avec l'appui de l'Assemblée législative est un acteur principal dans cette dynamique favorisant le développement de la communauté franco-ontarienne. Je suis particulièrement heureuse de vous dire que la très grande majorité des recommandations formulées par le commissaire depuis le début ont été adoptées ou ont donné suite à des actions porteuses et durables par notre gouvernement.

Depuis la création du commissariat, l'Ontario a grandement amélioré l'accès et la prestation des soins de santé en français, et je sais, pour l'entendre fréquemment de la voix de mes concitoyens, combien c'est apprécié de se faire soigner dans sa langue quand on est gravement malade ou affaibli.

1540

Les services de justice en français ont également été augmentés et d'autres initiatives sont à venir dans ce secteur.

L'éducation en langue française, une des priorités du gouvernement et du commissaire, s'améliore à tous les paliers, et l'on trouve en Ontario les meilleures pratiques en éducation en langue française qui font de l'Ontario un chef de file mondial en éducation.

These are just a few examples of how we continue to strengthen French-language services in Ontario, and we

are committed to working hard to continue supporting Franco-Ontarians in every corner of our province.

Aux dires mêmes du commissaire, et je le cite : « L'important est que le gouvernement ait participé au dialogue constructif initié par le citoyen et le commissariat, et que la population ait été tenue au courant. »

Je félicite chaleureusement le commissaire en titre, François Boileau, qui a été hautement efficace, et toute son équipe pour le travail remarquable qu'ils accomplissent.

Pour conclure, en 2015 l'Ontario va commémorer officiellement le 400<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de la présence française en Ontario. En cette occasion, nous allons démontrer au monde entier que nous sommes une province accueillante et ouverte sur le monde, une province qui est fière de sa communauté francophone qui ne cesse d'enrichir notre patrimoine collectif depuis quatre siècles. Et nous allons le dire en anglais et en français, avec tout le sens d'accomplissement qui nous revient.

So I invite my colleagues in the Legislative Assembly to show vision and leadership, as this Legislature did when it unanimously passed the French Language Services Act and when it adopted the Franco-Ontarian Day Act, and to say, with one voice, yes to the independence of the French Language Services Commissioner. As the French expression goes, "jamais deux sans trois," or good things come in threes. In doing so, we will once again be demonstrating to Ontario francophones that they fully and equally belong here in Ontario.

Je souhaite à tous et à toutes un excellent Jour des Franco-Ontariens et des Franco-Ontariennes. Que cette belle et grande célébration soit fêtée avec enthousiasme par tous nos concitoyens aux quatre coins de la province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Merci.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Merci beaucoup.

## BIOTECHNOLOGY

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** I am proud to recognize National Biotechnology Week. For Ontario, this week is particularly worthy of celebration. Our biotech industry is strong, and our province is positioning itself to be a global leader in the emerging bio-economy. We see biotechnology as an important part of Ontario's future. We want our province of Ontario to be the go-to place for innovative multinational partners, investors and customers.

There are so many fields where biology and technology intersect, different areas where we apply our knowledge and craftsmanship to make new biological processes or products. It is this broad nature of biotech that makes it so exciting. Biotech discoveries can transform a wide range of sectors, from health care and clean technology to farming and the auto industry. And while curing cancer and building cars seem to be very different, they have two very important features in common: (1) they are of tremendous global value, and (2) these are sectors where Ontario is particularly strong.



With our world-leading research institutions, collaborative R&D environment and well-educated workforce, we are positioned to grow even stronger, which means, as the new global bio-economy emerges, Ontario can step up as a leader.

This government recognizes this opportunity as part of building an agile and innovative economy. That's why the Ministry of Research and Innovation has several initiatives supporting research and the commercialization of new discoveries.

In addition to funding research, we support organizations like the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research, Ontario Brain Institute, the Health Technology Exchange, and Clinical Trials Ontario. Ontario provided funding to 39 life sciences companies from 2010 to 2012. This supported the creation and retention of more than 1,700 jobs and leveraged a total investment of about \$400 million.

Mr. Speaker, more than half of all life sciences R&D spending in Canada happens here in Ontario, and we are home to a remarkable cluster of top-ranked biomedical researchers, developers and manufacturers generating around \$5 billion in exports to all countries around the world. This cluster is effective because we accomplish so much more when we work together. Gone are the days when innovations came from scientists working alone in their labs. Today, competitive advantages come from collaborations among scientists between the private and the public sectors, and among various jurisdictions. Economic success in the 21st century is built on strategic partnerships, so a key goal for us is to facilitate interactions among researchers, government, industry and innovators to bring innovation and innovative products, technologies and services to market.

Biotechnology Week is a chance to recognize the great prospects for Ontarians in this exciting sector, opportunities that include good jobs and life-changing discoveries.

Our government is committed to helping move more Ontario technologies to domestic and international markets. We will continue to work with the biotech sector to create new opportunities and to establish Ontario as a preferred location for business, innovation and investments.

### SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS

**M<sup>me</sup> Lisa MacLeod:** Je suis fière d'avoir le privilège d'adresser l'Assemblée au nom de Tim Hudak et du caucus Ontario PC au sujet de la loi modifiant la Loi sur les services en français. J'aimerais féliciter Madeleine Meilleur et France Gélinas pour le travail qu'elles ont accompli concernant cette loi jusqu'à présent.

Il est important que le commissaire de la francophonie soit justiciable auprès de l'Assemblée et que les membres aient accès à ses rapports et ses conseils.

Il est probable que l'Assemblée a appris dernièrement que j'ai endossé la tâche additionnelle du portefeuille en matière d'affaires francophones au sein du caucus Ontario PC.

Quoique je dois admettre que je commence à peine mes efforts à apprendre le français et que je ne le parle pas couramment, j'ai offert d'endosser cette responsabilité car la langue et la culture françaises sont des sujets importants dans ma circonscription de Nepean-Carleton, au sein de ma ville d'Ottawa, et à l'échelle de la région de l'est de l'Ontario. C'est ainsi la raison pour laquelle je me suis inscrite à un cours de français.

Plusieurs membres de cette Chambre savent que mon mari et moi avons opté d'enregistrer notre fille dans un programme d'immersion précoce en français dès son entrée à la maternelle. Nous avons pris cette décision de l'enregistrer dans ce programme parce que nous sommes réalistes et que nous comprenons que le fait d'être en mesure de parler les deux langues officielles du Canada lui donnera tous les avantages dans ses perspectives d'avenir.

**1550**

Et de plus, nous avons choisi d'éduquer notre fille en français parce que mon mari, Joe Varner, arbore fièrement son héritage acadien et provient d'une longue lignée de Comeaux, en provenance de Digby, en Nouvelle-Écosse. Malheureusement, sa famille a perdu son héritage acadien peu à peu au fil des ans.

Maintenant en troisième année, Victoria s'exprime couramment dans sa langue seconde et à chaque année elle célèbre la fête de Sainte-Catherine. L'an dernier, sa classe m'a permis de célébrer la fête avec eux et j'ai pu les aider à préparer de la tire. It was very good.

L'enthousiasme démontré par notre fille concernant son héritage mixte Acadien-Écossais est un régal certain pour nous, ses parents. Nous sommes vraiment fiers de voir sa facilité à converser dans nos deux langues.

Lorsque j'ai annoncé à Victoria que j'avais offert de prendre la responsabilité à titre de porte-parole en matière d'affaires francophones, la petite, avec son sens d'humour habituel, roula les yeux et me dit : « Maman, je pourrais accomplir la tâche mieux que toi ».

*Laughter.*

**M<sup>me</sup> Lisa MacLeod:** Le journal Le Droit a approuvé. Ah, les petits délices de la vie d'une porte-parole de l'opposition.

Donc, je suis heureuse d'avoir été nommée à ce nouveau rôle par le chef PC. Ainsi, j'ai créé un nouveau poste au sein de mon équipe afin de prendre ce dossier en main.

Notre adjointe de direction et conseillère en matière d'affaires francophones sera nulle autre que la fille de notre ancien ministre des Affaires francophones, Noble Villeneuve.

Roxane Villeneuve sera la responsable des relations avec les intervenants, les communications et les relations communautaires. Elle travaillera en équipe avec Martin Forget, lequel a accepté d'agir dans un rôle consultatif auprès de mon bureau.

La fin de semaine passée, les délégués représentant l'est de l'Ontario au congrès du Parti PC ont adopté à l'unanimité une résolution notoire qui réitère notre

respect de la culture francophone, l'Hôpital Montfort et la Loi 8.

C'est alors que j'ai pris l'engagement personnel envers l'éducation de langue française en Ontario à titre de porte-parole en matière d'éducation du Parti PC, ayant prêté main forte aux commissions scolaires francophones de ma propre circonscription, et ayant pu discuter avec l'AEFO, la seule union d'enseignants et enseignantes de l'Ontario à m'avoir permis de me joindre à eux lors de leur assemblée générale annuelle. Un esprit de générosité pareil ne s'oublie pas.

Donc, c'est un privilège énorme que d'assumer cette responsabilité et je suis tout à fait prête à travailler avec mes collègues en tant que porte-parole de l'opposition officielle pour les affaires francophones. Merci.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Let's say that once you become very good at French, you will not go over time.

### SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Je commence en félicitant la députée de Nepean—Carleton. Elle a fait de gros efforts et ça vaut la peine d'être mentionné.

J'aimerais également joindre ma voix pour remercier M. François Boileau, notre commissaire aux services en français, qui est là en ce moment en poste et qui continuera d'être en poste lorsque la nouvelle loi sera mise en oeuvre. J'aimerais souligner M. Denis Vaillancourt, le président de l'AFO, Peter Hominuk, leur directeur général, et Benjamin Vachet, qui sont ici avec nous pour le passage historique de ce petit projet de loi. C'est un projet de loi que j'ai présenté trois fois—en 2008, en 2011 et en 2013—et qui, j'ai l'impression, se rapproche de plus en plus de la ligne d'arrivée de changer la relation du commissaire aux services en français.

En ce moment, il relève de la ministre déléguée aux services en français et je dois dire qu'on n'a jamais eu aucun problème. La ministre en place a toujours accepté de partager dans son ensemble les recommandations et les rapports du commissaire. Ce n'est pas parce qu'on a un problème que ce projet de loi-là devait être mis en place. C'est vraiment pour assurer la pérennité du poste et pour également donner une coupée franche au commissaire.

Plusieurs de ses recommandations, franchement, n'avaient rien à faire avec les services en français. C'était des recommandations qui allaient à la ministre de la Santé, à la ministre de l'Éducation, à la ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse, et cetera. Aussitôt que ce projet de loi-là aura fait le comité et sera devenu loi, il pourra faire ses recommandations directement à ces ministres-là, à travers de vous, bien entendu, monsieur le Président, en déposant ses rapports à tous les députés.

Dans mon poste de critique pour la francophonie, je vous assure que je vais jouer mon rôle pour m'assurer que les ministres qui reçoivent des recommandations de notre commissaire les mettent en oeuvre dans des délais de temps raisonnables. Le temps était venu pour ça.

Il nous a bien servi, notre commissaire. Je suis heureuse des recommandations qu'il a faites et je suis d'accord avec la ministre que des gros changements ont été faits grâce à ses efforts. Mais je crois également que le projet de loi qui a été déposé aujourd'hui, pour lequel nous avons reçu le consentement unanime pour aller en deuxième lecture, deviendra loi sous peu en Ontario et il va continuer de bien nous servir.

Ça m'a fait plaisir d'ajouter ces quelques mots. Bien entendu, je souhaite à tous les Ontariens et Ontariennes une bonne Journée des Franco-Ontariens et un gros, gros merci à M. Gaétan Gervais. Gaétan Gervais est le créateur du drapeau franco-Ontarien. Je sais qu'il m'écoute en ce moment. C'est un résident de mon comté. Merci, Gaétan, pour tout ce que tu as fait pour nous. On est fier de notre drapeau. Il va flotter partout aujourd'hui et, j'espère, pour toujours. Merci beaucoup.

### BIOTECHNOLOGY

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's a pleasure to rise today and speak about the 10th annual National Biotechnology Week, celebrating excellence in biotechnology across the country.

Like many unsung sectors of our economy, biotechnology is more important to Canada's economic and social prosperity than is perhaps known. Since 2007, the biotech industry has grown nationwide by more than 12%. Canada's bioeconomy is worth over \$87 billion.

Biotechnology as a sector of our economy is large and it is growing. And it involves more than many sectors of our economy. Pharmaceutical manufacturing, health care and medicine are all well known, but biotechnology plays an important role in agriculture and food processing as well.

In my riding of Kitchener—Waterloo, biotechnology is not only part of our local economy; it is an increasing part of our world-class universities, the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier.

Less than two years ago, the University of Waterloo opened its Centre for Bioengineering and Biotechnology and boasts more than 80 members from multiple faculties. Its goal is to incorporate partnerships with hospitals, organizations, companies and members of the university's student body as well.

Wilfrid Laurier University, too, has a biochemistry and biotechnology program that attracts talented academics and aspiring students.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to highlight the Ontario Bioscience Innovation Organization. There is an MPP life science caucus initiative, so we are very much part of furthering the research and biotechnology. MPPs need to get involved. It's an important part of the economy, and I'd encourage MPPs to pay attention to this important, growing sector.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements. I would like to editorialize for a short moment to bring to our attention and a very large thank you on behalf of us all to the interpreters who



provide us with instant French interpretation. I'd like to thank them.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Mr. Speaker, point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Point of order.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** First of all, let me congratulate Madame Lisa Macleod as my critic. We've known each other for quite a long time.

I want to invite all the members of the assembly to a reception at 4:30 in room 247 and to join us outside at five to 6 p.m. for the raising of the flag.

1600

## PETITIONS

### GENETICALLY-MODIFIED ALFALFA

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is now time for petitions. The member from Oxford looks enthusiastic, so I'm going to go to him.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have here a petition that was sent to me by Ann Slater of RR 1 Lakeside. She gathered a number of signatures from not only my riding, but a large area around us. It is a petition to stop GM alfalfa.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas genetically modified (GM) alfalfa will contaminate farmers' fields and our food system; and some farmers in Ontario are requesting an environmental assessment in Ontario before the seeds are sold;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to take action to prevent the commercial introduction of genetically modified alfalfa in Ontario."

I thank you for the opportunity to present this petition on behalf of Ann Slater.

### WIND TURBINES

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I have a petition from my riding of Durham, which reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas industrial wind turbine developments have raised concerns among citizens over health, safety and property values; and

"Whereas the Green Energy Act allows wind turbine developments to bypass meaningful public input and municipal approvals;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Minister of the Environment revise the Green Energy Act to allow full public input and municipal approvals on all industrial wind farm developments and that a moratorium on wind development be declared until an independent, epidemiological study is completed into the health and environmental impacts of industrial wind turbines."

I'm pleased to sign it, support it and present it to Taylor.

## ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLES

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas these vehicles are as safe as any motorcycle carrying a passenger since all of the manufacturers of the '2-up machines' have redesigned their original models by extending the wheel bases, beefing up the suspension to allow the carriage of passengers on the machine safely and providing a rear seat, many with handholds;

"Whereas the privilege to ride on secondary highways and trails with two people on a recreational vehicle is denied to off-road vehicle (ORV) operators but is granted to snowmobiles;

"Whereas the definition of an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) in regulation 316/03 no longer reflects the majority of ATVs being marketed and sold in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Amend the definition of an ATV to include those that are: (a) designed to carry a passenger; (b) with more than four tires and designed to carry passengers; (c) without a straddle seat, carries passengers and has a steering wheel."

I support this petition, and I will present it to page—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Perth—Wellington.

## ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's tradespeople are subject to stifling regulation and are compelled to pay membership fees to the unaccountable College of Trades; and

"Whereas these fees are a tax grab that drives down the wages of skilled tradespeople; and

"Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encouraging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and

"Whereas the latest policies from the Wynne government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately disband the College of Trades, cease imposing needless membership fees and enact policies to attract young Ontarians into skilled trade careers."

I agree with this petition, and I will send it down with page James.

## PROROGATION

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas MPPs are elected to represent their constituents in the Ontario Legislature;

"Whereas prorogation has an important role in Westminster parliamentary systems democracies that should not be abused by the government of the day;

"Whereas the use of prorogation to avoid accountability in sitting Legislatures has become a worrying trend;

"Whereas Ontarians deserve to know when their representatives will be back at Queen's Park when the Legislature is prorogued;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario should take action to ensure that the Premier cannot prorogue without first seeking a resolution from the Legislative Assembly."

I support this petition and will affix my signature.

### HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ministry of Transportation has indicated it will be making improvements to Highway 21 between Port Elgin and Southampton in 2014; and

"Whereas the ministry has not acknowledged the repeated requests from the community and others to undertake safety enhancements to the portion of the highway where it intersects with the Saugeen Rail Trail crossing; and

"Whereas this trail is a vital part of an interconnected active transportation route providing significant recreational and economic benefit to the town of Saugeen Shores, the county of Bruce and beyond;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario to require the MTO to include, as part of the design for the improvements to Highway 21 between Port Elgin and Southampton, measures that will enhance the safety for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists and all others that use the Rail Trail crossing; and to consult and collaborate with the town of Saugeen Shores and other groups in determining cost-effective measures that will maintain the function of the highway while aligning with the active transportation needs of all interested parties who use the Saugeen Rail Trail."

I have been receiving hundreds of signatures. I agree with this petition, and I will send it to the table with Sean.

### ONTARIO MUNICIPAL BOARD

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** "Whereas the Ontario Municipal Board is a provincial agency composed of unelected members unaccountable to Ontarians; and

"Whereas the Ontario Municipal Board has the power to unilaterally alter local development decisions made by municipalities and their communities; and

"Whereas the city of Toronto is the largest city in Ontario; and

"Whereas the city of Toronto has a planning department composed of professional planners, an extensive legal department and 44 full-time city councillors directly elected by its citizens; and

"Whereas Toronto's city council voted overwhelmingly in February 2012 to request an exemption from the Ontario Municipal Board's jurisdiction;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to recognize the ability of the city of Toronto to handle its own urban planning and development; and

"Further, that the Ontario Municipal Board no longer have jurisdiction over the city of Toronto."

I couldn't agree more. I'm affixing my signature, and I'm giving it to James to be delivered to the desk.

### FAMILY CAREGIVER LEAVE

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the people of Ontario deserve to be able to look after their sick or injured family members without fearing that they will lose their jobs at such a vulnerable time;

"Whereas the people of Ontario deserve to be able to spend time looking for a child that has disappeared, or take time off to grieve the death of a child that was murdered without fearing that they will lose their jobs;

"Whereas the federal government has recently extended similar leaves and economic supports to federal employees;

"Whereas the government of Ontario, and the Premier of Ontario, support Ontario families and wish to foster mental and physical well-being by allowing those closest to sick or injured family members the time to provide support free of work-related concerns;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario pass and enact, during spring of 2013, Bill 21, the Leaves to Help Families Act."

I fully support the petitions, and I give them to page Daniel.

### ALGONQUIN LAND CLAIM

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there are serious concerns with the process leading to the current agreement in principle (AIP) between the AOO, the government of Ontario and the government of Canada, as well as with the selection of certain lands to be transferred to the AOO—the Algonquins of Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to do the following:

"(1) Amend the AIP"—the agreement in principle—"to include protection of the public interest as it is apparent from the AIP that the province did ensure that



its own corporate interests were protected, however, there is no indication that any effort was made to protect the public interest or that it was considered in any balanced fashion;

“(2) Retain Camp Island (as identified by parcel 83-F3) as crown land for public use and that it not be transferred to the AOO as the island has a long history of private ownership and was sold to the crown in 1970 for \$5 only after assurances were given that it would remain in its natural state and be for public use, and the crown would be breaking those assurances and breaching the public trust if the island was transferred to the AOO as the island would then become private land for the enjoyment of few; and

“(3) Ensure Mattawa River Provincial Park (MRPP) remain as crown land for public use and not be transferred to the AOO as the park was created in 1970 and expanded in 1999 in recognition of its historical, cultural, recreational and ecological significance under Ontario’s Living Legacy Lands for Life initiative, and any development in the park would create a severe ecological and environmental disturbance to the area and exclude a very large community of local, national and international visitors from experiencing the uniqueness of this area.”

I will give this to page Ian, whose grandmother is from Sudbury.

1610

### GOVERNMENT SERVICES

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas northern Ontario will suffer a huge loss of service as a result of government cuts to ServiceOntario counters;

“Whereas these cuts will have a negative impact on local businesses and local economies;

“Whereas northerners will now face challenges in accessing their birth certificates, health cards and licences;

“Whereas northern Ontario should not unfairly bear the brunt of decisions to slash operating budgets;

“Whereas regardless of address, all Ontarians should be treated equally by their government;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Review the decision to cut access to ServiceOntario for northerners, and provide northern Ontarians equal access to these services.”

I agree with this petition and present it to you, Massoma.

### AIR QUALITY

**Mr. John O’Toole:** Again, a petition from my riding of Durham, which reads as follows:

“Whereas collecting and restoring old vehicles honours Ontario’s automotive heritage while contributing to

the economy through the purchase of goods and services, tourism, and support for special events; and

“Whereas the stringent application of emissions regulations for older cars equipped with newer engines can result in fines and additional expenses that discourage car collectors and restorers from pursuing their hobby; and

“Whereas newer engines installed by hobbyists in vehicles over 20 years old provide cleaner emissions than the original equipment; and

“Whereas car collectors typically use their vehicles only on an occasional basis, during four to five months of the year;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, request that the Ontario Legislature support Ontarians who collect and restore old vehicles by amending the appropriate laws and regulations to ensure vehicles over 20 years old and exempt from Drive Clean testing shall also be exempt from additional emissions requirements enforced by the Ministry of the Environment and governing the installation of newer engines into old cars and trucks.”

I’m pleased to sign and support this on behalf of my constituents and present it to Peyton, one of the pages.

### PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the proposed changes to physiotherapy services in the province of Ontario effective August 1, 2013, will severely restrict the access to physiotherapy treatments for seniors who live in retirement homes; and

“Whereas these changes will deprive seniors and other eligible clients from the many health and mobility benefits of physiotherapy;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the provincial government guarantees there will be no reduction in services currently available for seniors and people with disabilities who are currently eligible for OHIP-funded physiotherapy.”

I support this petition and will affix my signature.

### HOSPITAL PARKING FEES

**Mr. John O’Toole:** I’m the only one paying attention, it appears. From my riding of Durham, this petition reads as follows:

“Whereas the United Senior Citizens of Ontario has expressed its concerns over the high costs of parking at hospitals in Ontario on behalf of its more than 300,000 members; and

“Whereas thousands of Ontario seniors find it difficult to live on their fixed income and cannot afford these extra hospital parking fees added to their daily living costs; and

“Whereas the Canadian Medical Association Journal has said in an editorial that parking fees are a barrier to health care and add additional stress to patients who have enough to deal with;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Ontario's members of provincial Parliament, and the provincial government, take action to abolish parking fees for all seniors when visiting hospitals."

I'm pleased to present this to Daniel, one of the pages.

#### AIR-RAIL LINK

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas diesel trains are a health hazard for people who live near them;

"Whereas more toxic fumes will be created by the 400 daily trains than the car trips they are meant to replace;

"Whereas the planned air-rail link does not serve the communities through which it passes and will be priced beyond the reach of most commuters;

"Whereas all major cities in the world with train service between their downtown core and the airport use electric trains;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the province of Ontario stop building the air-rail link for diesel and move to electrify the route immediately;

"That the air-rail link be designed, operated and priced as an affordable transportation option between all points along its route."

I couldn't agree more. I'm going to sign it and give it to Katherine to be delivered to the desk.

#### BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** "Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas we, the undersigned, request the installation of a permanent walkway and bike access on the Batchawana River bridge.

"We, the undersigned, are petitioning to have a walkway and bike access on Batchawana Bridge to ensure the safety of the large number of pedestrians and bikers who cross the bridge daily in Batchawana provincial park and nearby hiking and biking trails. It is only a matter of time before someone is hit due to the complete lack of room on the bridge for pedestrians. The bridge is presently being rebuilt and there is time right now to add the walkway if immediate action is taken."

I agree with this petition and will present it to page Erica.

### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Anne Stokes):** Your committee begs to report the following bill, as amended:

An Act to establish a Financial Accountability Officer / Loi créant le poste de directeur de la responsabilité financière.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

*Report adopted.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 5, 2013, the bill is ordered for third reading.

#### FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 SUR LE DIRECTEUR DE LA RESPONSABILITÉ FINANCIÈRE

Mr. Del Duca, on behalf of Mr. Sousa, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 95, An Act to establish a Financial Accountability Officer / Projet de loi 95, Loi créant le poste de directeur de la responsabilité financière.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Debate?

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** It's a pleasure for me to rise today and to speak once again, here at third reading, with respect to Bill 95, the Financial Accountability Officer Act, 2013.

We had the opportunity, several of us in this Legislature, to be at committee earlier today to go over, clause by clause, with respect to this particular bill. I thought we had a fascinating discussion, as we often do at committee. I want to commend the members opposite from both parties with respect to the contribution they made to the discussions that we had at committee earlier today.

I think it actually speaks to the broad support that this concept enjoys, not just amongst members of this Legislature but also amongst people from across Ontario. Certainly, I've heard from residents living in my community of Vaughan about the importance of ensuring that tax dollars are spent in the most transparent, accountable way possible here in the Legislature.

I believe I said this when we were debating it at second reading: I believe that this particular move, this particular bill proposing to create this new position, actually is, very much so, a natural evolution of a lot of what has taken place in this chamber over the last nine years, soon to be 10 years, since the Ontario Liberal government came back to power.

I remember speaking about this at second reading and talking about how we introduced legislation way back in



2003 that made it virtually—actually, not virtually—it made it impossible for any outgoing government to effectively lie to the people of Ontario about hidden deficits. We brought the Auditor General in to provide that greater level of transparency and accountability with respect to our government books before a general election campaign can ever take place in the province going forward. Many here and many watching at home will remember that back in 2003, the outgoing Conservative government effectively told the people of Ontario the books were balanced when, in fact, they weren't, Speaker. There was close to a \$6-billion hidden deficit. With us passing that legislation back about 10 years ago, that can't happen any further. I said this at second reading. I'll say it again today.

There was a time in Ontario—a lot of younger people don't remember this time; they actually don't believe that this took place. But it is in fact the case, Speaker, that there was a time in Ontario when governments could spend tens if not hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars to advertise, to publicize government initiatives. Speaker, again, we took action as a party, as a government under the leadership of Dalton McGuinty, at the time—and this has followed through under the leadership of Premier Kathleen Wynne to this day—to make sure that people's tax dollars were being respected and that those monies were no longer being spent on what was effectively thinly veiled partisan advertising.

There's a series of other steps that we've taken over the last 10 years. That's why, when I stood at second reading—in fact, Speaker, back in the spring when we were having discussions about the budget, and this idea, this concept, first came forward and was first discussed, many on this side and many I spoke to do believe—and I certainly do, Speaker—that this is very much the natural extension, the natural evolution, of many of the steps that the Ontario Liberal government has taken over the last 10 years to make sure that that very important level of transparency and accountability is brought to bear on behalf of the people who send us here, the people who work so hard to balance their own chequebooks, their own bank accounts at home to make sure they're investing properly. They send us here on the understanding that we will act in their best interests and in the best interests of what is important to them.

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So when we as a government came forward in a budget, as we did this previous spring, and proposed to create this new position, the Financial Accountability Officer, I think that speaks very much to the importance and the emphasis this government is determined to place with respect to making sure that people out there—people watching this and understanding what we're doing here on their behalf—understand and accept and support that we are bringing that level of transparency and accountability.

I do want to commend the third party for their participation at committee earlier today. The member from Kitchener–Waterloo and her colleague spoke today, I

thought, very eloquently and in a very articulate way with respect to some of the valid and constructive concerns they had around some of the proposed amendments, which actually, as I recall, in many cases were successfully adopted at clause-by-clause earlier today.

I don't want to wade too far into anything that might even sort of remotely appear to be partisan, but unfortunately, in keeping with a pattern we've seen here in this Legislature for the last couple of years—I've certainly seen it in the 12 months I've been here—members from the official opposition who were serving on the committee saw fit not to be quite as constructive and spent their time speaking at committee by editorializing and providing sort of prefacing statements that spoke more to their own narrow, sort of crass, partisan interests instead of taking the larger view.

I certainly hope that in the course of the debate here at third reading, we will not hear that kind of unfortunate messaging from members of the official opposition, and that they will take their opportunity on the floor of this chamber today to speak constructively, to talk about why this is moving the province of Ontario forward in the right way.

A couple of things we saw throughout the process: We had a chance, a number of days ago at committee, to hear from the very well-known former Parliamentary Budget Officer from Ottawa, Mr. Kevin Page, an individual whose reputation, when it comes to performing these kinds of duties, when it comes to providing that transparency and accountability—frankly, Speaker, an individual whose reputation, when it comes, as the saying goes, to speaking truth to power, I believe, is unparalleled in our country.

He was good enough to give of his time to allow committee members to ask him questions about his own experiences, having served in Ottawa; having faced those challenges, unfortunately, that Canadians from coast to coast to coast saw him face as he attempted to bring, again, that level of transparency and accountability to what was taking place in Ottawa with the federal Conservative government. Notwithstanding its desire to create a Parliamentary Budget Office in the nation's capital, we saw at every turn, unfortunately, a federal Conservative government that saw fit to try to thwart the work of Mr. Page and his office.

That's why it was very interesting to hear from him directly about his own experiences. It was also very interesting to read his report, to see that he gave us some very sage counsel about how we might improve upon what's actually in the bill. Some of those recommendations, some of those ideas, found their way into the amendments that were put forward today, which we discussed at committee.

Speaker, I think it's important to recognize that this government took into account some of the challenges in the architecture that kind of underpins or was behind or at the very foundation of what was created in Ottawa, when we started out to create this position, this office, this idea or this concept here in Ontario.

I think Mr. Page was actually quite happy to see that we had taken steps in this legislation in Bill 95 to at least do our very best to prevent the same kinds of unfortunate attempts at thwarting this work that we've seen the federal Conservative government of Mr. Harper and his colleagues undertake to do over the last number of years.

I think that when you look at the fact that, working with the other parties here and certainly talking to a number of stakeholders through the budget process, we have created a position that is unprecedented in terms of other provinces in Canada—Ontario being the first to move forward with this kind of proposal, this kind of legislation. When you see what has taken place in other jurisdictions—be it Australia, be it elsewhere—with the success this kind of position has had, I think we are now at a stage, after going through the process, after having the clause-by-clause today, after hearing very directly from Mr. Page—a number of members in this House I'm sure have heard directly from people in their own constituencies, as I have, about the importance of this issue. I think that over the course of the 40 or so minutes that we have for debate here at third reading this afternoon, I look forward to hearing a lot of other articulate, eloquent, but most importantly constructive ideas coming forward, supportive ideas coming forward, supportive messages coming forward from members of the opposition.

I'll tell you why it's extremely important to make sure that we bring that level of transparency and accountability, that we provide that for the people who send us here, the people on whose behalf we are working. It's important because they deserve it. There's no doubt about that. But, Speaker, it's also important because, in the long run, making sure that we are providing that level of transparency and that level of fiscal responsibility is what helps to ensure that this province and our economy continues to grow, continues to move forward—that we continue both in terms of our budgeting process and in terms of appearances at estimates and providing public accounts, and all the work that goes into making sure we are providing the relevant fiscal and economic information to the people who send us here, the people of Ontario.

When we take steps like this and like all of those other steps that I talked about earlier in my remarks today, that evolutionary process that started way back in 2003 and continues to this day with this particular legislation, we see the results. We see the evidence that our plan, this plan of ensuring that we have the requisite amount, the appropriate amount, of transparency and accountability at every stage in the process and the deliberations that we have here—we see evidence clearly that this plan is working. We see evidence that Ontario is moving forward in a very strong way, that our economy has come out of the 2008 global recession. While our recovery continues to require tending and continues to require work, by introducing a position like this, by introducing legislation like this, by including legislation like this in the 2013 budget, this government helps to underscore exactly how important this issue is for us.

Just the other day when the Minister of Finance, someone with whom I'm very proud to serve—Minister Sousa, the member from Mississauga South—went to public accounts, he talked about the fact that we are ahead of schedule—not once; not twice; several times ahead of schedule—with respect to balancing our books, that we remain committed to getting there by 2017-18. We see, for the very first time in a number of years, that the year-over-year difference in government spending has actually dropped because of the hard work and the diligence and that absolute determination on the part of this minister, this Premier and this government to make sure that the people of Ontario get that kind of accountability and transparency that they see.

The number of jobs that have been created since the depths of the recession in 2008—more than 400,000 jobs have been created. Again, this is additional evidence, additional proof that the balanced and responsible approach of the Wynne government is working for the people of Ontario. And I hear it; I hear it in Vaughan. It doesn't matter if I'm at Vaughan Mills, hanging out at Legoland with my daughters, or at Wonderland over the course of the summer, or I might have been at the McMichael gallery, or the Binder Twine Festival in Kleinburg—just the other day, the first Saturday after Labour Day, a time-honoured annual tradition in my community of Vaughan, in the village of Kleinburg. I heard it loud and clear from people who understand that the steps we are taking here in this Legislature on this side of the House are the kinds of measures, the kinds of mechanisms, that will produce results for a very strong economic recovery continuing, for a very strong prosperous future for the people of Ontario.

Most of all, when our economy is firing on all cylinders, when we get to that point where we are moving in that right direction because of the decisions we're making, because of the level of transparency and accountability that we're bringing to bear, that's the best way for this chamber, for this Legislature, to help people in their everyday lives. That's something that I know that our government has created, too.

I talked about this earlier: The deficit-reduction timetable is far ahead of schedule. We are perhaps the only jurisdiction in Canada—certainly, as you compare us to what has taken place in Ottawa with the federal Conservative government, our record in terms of balancing the books, or getting back to balance, is remarkable, especially when you consider the fiscal mess that was left here in the province of Ontario back in 2003. It was not just a fiscal mess but an ethical mess, a very important ethical mess, because the party opposite chose to hide the fact that there was nearly \$6 billion in deficit from the people of Ontario.

When you look at this kind of position, when you consider what a Financial Accountability Officer will be able to do in terms of lending analysis and research and opportunities for members of all three parties—not just the governing side, but all three parties—to come forward with important questions about the financial and econom-



ic components of any particular proposal or bill, when you consider that that's a new opportunity—a new tactic, let's call it—to help every member of this House do a better job, from my perspective, that means that the legislation we produce here, the proposals we produce here, the ideas that the people across Ontario send us here to come up with on their behalf, will ultimately be stronger.

1630

There are tons of reasons for every single member in this House to stand in their place when this comes for a vote to make sure that we send a very loud and clear message—that the proposal to create the Financial Accountability Office or Officer here, through Bill 95, is something that deserves very, very strong support from this chamber, from members on all three sides of the House—because it's important to send a message to the people of Ontario that we understand your concerns. We are right there with you when it comes to spending the tax dollars that you send to us on your behalf so that we can invest in building a stronger, more prosperous economy and help you in your everyday lives. We are here to do it. We are here to work with you.

I think every member in this House, both in the debate today and when this comes to a vote, has the opportunity to work with us to send a very clear message to people in all of their communities, whether they're from Scarborough—Guildwood or Scarborough Centre, Brampton West or Ottawa-Orléans, or any other riding across this province—to send that very clear message: “We understand. We support your desire. We respect that you deserve to have the level of accountability and transparency that we have always delivered throughout these last 10 years.” With the creation of this position and the passage of this bill, Bill 95, we will help achieve that outcome.

I call on every member, both in the comments they're going to make here this afternoon and when this comes to a final vote, to stand with us to support this bill and move this item forward. Let's get it passed, let's get on with the work and let's continue to move Ontario's economy forward.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** It is my pleasure today to be sharing the time with the member from Nipissing, who is our finance critic.

I've had the privilege of being here for 18 years, and I put things into context. This bill—I'm going to try to stay on Bill 95, An Act to establish a Financial Accountability Officer. It's another layer of government, another layer of bureaucracy.

We don't disagree with the intent here. It was not the Liberal Party that brought this in. It was actually the NDP that brought this in as part of a budget motion. The Liberals had no intention of doing it, and they have no intention of following it. If you listened to the meeting this morning on the clause-by-clause and the amendments, you would know full well that they have no idea.

To put some context on this—and there were some references made by the prior speaker, who has been here for a brief time; he was a staff person for quite a while before that. I would say this: His references were unnecessary and unhelpful and not informed. In fact, it was Stephen Harper, the Prime Minister of Canada, who initiated the budget office in Ottawa, and he appointed Mr. Page as well. Some of the discussions—people have to look at Hansard to find out. The discussions on Bill 95, to some extent, are not clarified unless we deal with these things about the budget officer in Ottawa. That became quite newsworthy during the debate around the F-35. The role and definition of the scope for the budget officer was the real question, and his access to all the information. It may be correct that it wasn't within his mandate to have access to some of the information.

In fairness, to be honest, there were 13 amendments moved. One of them was the NDP motion, which we strongly supported, and that motion was to ensure that they had access to “all the information,” not just the financial, and I commend the critic on the NDP for that.

I don't trust the Liberals, and I want to frame this—I don't trust them at all. But here's a bit of background. This bill is quite a small bill. It's six and a half pages. It's got 13 amendments, and the number of sections in it—there are 19 sections. But really, substantively, once you get beyond the description section, under the mandate and the reporting part of it is the substantive part of the bill. It's about a page and a half—really nothing in it. In fact, of six and a half pages, half of it is in French, so it's really only about three pages long. So it's not a very comprehensive bill.

We tried to make some positive amendments, and I could put those on the record. But, Mr. Speaker, I should say this: The Auditor General for Ontario has served the people of Ontario very well, telling us what is or is not working well, whether it's under the Highway Traffic Act or whether it's under provincial offences or a whole range of issues that they can look into.

I did file with the committee a report which all of us have access to. This report was issued—I'm going to read it here; it's worth putting it on the record. I gave all members a copy of it. It's called The Auditor General's Review of the 2011 Pre-Election Report on Ontario's Finances. It was issued by Jim McCarter, who, at that time, was the Auditor General of Ontario and prior to that he was the assistant auditor general. He issued the report June 28 before the election in October.

I'm going to put this in context because the discussion on this is that the auditor can only look back on issues that he wants to comment on. In fact, this report—which is authorized by legislation, I should say, and I'm going to put it in context:

“The government tabled its 2011 Pre-Election Report on Ontario's Finances on April 26, 2011,”—and I'm reading from the report—“as required by the Fiscal Transparency and Accountability Act, 2004....” That's the act that required them, prior to an election, to issue a financial accountability report—that report was done by

the auditor—and this was being directed to look forward at the revenue and to look at the expenditure side and see if it was any way of being in balance, and here's what he said.

I see the parliamentary secretary has left, so he's not even paying attention.

It says in the report, "However, we concluded that many of the assumptions underlying its estimates for program expenses (that is, expenses excluding interest on the public debt and reserves) were optimistic and aggressive rather than cautious," which were the—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order, the member from Timmins—James Bay.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I seek unanimous consent that we allow the committees to sit at this time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Timmins—James Bay is seeking consent that the committees sit at this time.

**Interjection:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I hear no.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'm sure the House leaders could have slashed that out if he'd only work with the other House leaders. Anyway, that's a fact. I want that on the record as well. Thank you very much. The House leader for the NDP is trying to play other subliminal games, I suppose, that cause distrust here.

I would only say this, though: that in that context, there's the auditor saying that they made assumptions.

This report is worth every person in Ontario looking at, because what they said here—and it's all in here. I don't have enough time. If I had an hour, I could really cover it. Here's the issue. What was actually going on at the time was this: The actual average growth in Ontario from 2003 to 2011 in health care was—average growth per year was 7.1%. Their pre-budget election platform was cutting that to 3.6%, cutting health care in half.

The next thing was education, which was 4.8%, and it was being cut to 3%; post-secondary was 8.6%, and it was being cut to 2%.

Children and social services was 6.7%, going to 3.2%. In fact, they were going from an average spending per year of 7% to 1.8%, and the auditor said it was optimistic and aggressive; that could not be achieved.

Where are we now? The deficit is bigger, not smaller, and that's been the whole point of why it's out of control.

There are two other reports—now this, in context—my colleague the critic for finance, Mr. Fedeli, will be commenting in some detail with all the work he's done.

We had one report from the Auditor General, a special report in 2013—everybody's seen it—on the closing of the gas plant; half a billion dollars wasted—a scandalous waste of money. They withheld information from the committee. It's still a question in question period by both our party, Mr. Hudak, as well as from the NDP to allow the committee to have access to information. What did they do? They redacted most of the reports and never sent them all the reports. In fact, they deleted half the emails. You can't trust them. A person you're having a

contract relationship with that you can't trust makes it dysfunctional, and I suggest now that this government can't govern.

This bill is strictly wallpaper. It's got nothing to do with anything. If someone's not telling the truth, they're not telling the truth. That's just one report, and we're now waiting for the second report which we know they have a draft of. They can say honestly they don't have the report, but they have a draft; I'm sure of it. This report's going to be on the Oakville plant. That Oakville plant—I'm telling you now, viewers of Ontario: that gas plant scandal is a \$1-billion boondoggle—\$1 billion. You got nothing for it. In fact, it's more than that because some of the plants—in Lambton, they don't want the gas plant there. TransCanada does not want to be on public; they want to own the property. In fact, none of those plants have generated one megawatt of energy.

1640

Then we see the whole tragic mess they've made of the equine industry, the Slots at Racetracks Program—a great report written on this that is very, very critical of this government and its ability to manage.

Not only that; there's another report here. This one is by the Fraser Forum on the budget in Ontario. Here's a picture of the then-minister, who then resigned. Talk about accountability. He ran from the fire. It says here, Ontario Budget 2012: A Missed Opportunity. It went on to say—well, it was devastating. In fact, I think that was why he resigned—this whole report with his picture. It went on to say some things like, "Had Duncan actually seized the opportunity to balance Ontario's books, he could have done so in just two years—the same time horizon as the federal Liberals in the 1990s. In fact, if Duncan had emulated Paul Martin and cut program spending by" up to 9% "over two years, planned ... spending for 2013-14 would have decreased from \$117 billion to \$103 billion and the planned \$13 billion deficit would have been erased."

Our leader, Tim Hudak, has said nothing but that. When they make these statements about what we're going to do or not do—what we've put on the table is an across-the-board public sector wage freeze. It saves \$2 billion. It doesn't talk about anybody getting laid off or any cuts in service. What is this government doing? They're cutting physiotherapy. They're cutting your access to diabetic strips. They're cutting back access to drugs.

A patient just died today in my riding whom I had meet here with the Minister of Health. That patient died today. His name is Mr. Derry, and I'm just heartbroken that this is a result of an inability to access the proper medication at the right time.

This government is not fit to govern, and this accountability bill is just another opportunity to say, listen, I can't work with someone I can't trust, and I don't trust this government. That is a fact. Whether it's your electricity bill, or another good example of how recklessly—for the people of Ontario who I'm really speaking to—



**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I hate to break up the event, but there seem to be four people talking in the middle of the—if you'd like to go back to your seats or go outside to have your meeting, I'd appreciate it.

Continue with the debate. Thanks.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Thank you very, very much. I lost a few seconds there, so I've got to get to this report. This one here is a report called the Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services. This one here was done by Don Drummond. Don Drummond was Paul Martin's deputy minister. This is not some conservative person, necessarily—a fiscal conservative, perhaps; yes. He had 362 recommendations. Our leader, Tim Hudak—it's the basis of our platform, generally. You can't spend more than you earn for very long. We are robbing from the future of this province and our young people. Some of them here, the pages, will be paying off the debt.

Right now, every man, woman and child in Ontario, under the McGuinty-Wynne government, owes \$22,000. In fact, we're spending about—I believe it's \$28 million, every single day, more than we earn. They are mortgaging the future as we speak. It's not sustainable. We see how healthy the economy is. RIM almost closed. That's our poster child success story, and it's going to be shaved off and put into a number of pieces, I'm sure.

This recommends many of the decisions here that have to be made, and I've come to the conclusion, after 18 years here—here's how it really works here: We are elected in the trust of the people of Ontario, our constituents, to do the right thing at the right time for the right reasons. Anybody, with no consideration at all, could say yes all the time. It's like parents spoiling their child, saying, "Can I have the car? Why can't I have a cell-phone?" and never building any accountability into that.

This is what has happened to this government. They've given the teachers everything. They've given everybody everything they want. In fact, their average payroll increases have exceeded—this is what the Auditor General said—the growth in the standard of living or the cost of living in the last two settlements in the province of Ontario. That's why you have a structural deficit. You're expanding the growth faster than you are the revenue.

There's another report that serves as, "We've got people looking at it." We don't need another level of bureaucracy. I asked in committee, of the parliamentary secretary and indeed of the minister, Mr. Sousa, "You've got this idea, and we're going to start to work together and we're going to build accountability." Wouldn't it be a good way to say, "How much is it going to cost," first? I'm not saying how much it should cost. How much is it going to cost? They're planning this office, and the rent, the computers, the business cards, the severance packages, the insurance plans—how much is it going to cost to have this office? They have no idea. What they said is that they have no idea. You can't spend money you don't have. It's like me wanting to have another car. If I've lost my job I have to get rid of the car, not buy another one.

We know this. You know this, Speaker. You're a person with a great background in labour negotiations, I think. Here's what has happened: They've lost complete control. The only way they solve any problem is to write a cheque, a promissory note. It's like the mess they've made of the subway debate in Toronto. I wouldn't have them park my car. I have no trust for them. They just squander money recklessly without any accountability.

They actually defeated the motion that would have allowed this proposed officer of the Legislature to have access to "all the information." Can you imagine? They were forced into this, remember, by the NDP, who probably mean what they say. But I don't trust them. We're going to have another office. It's going to cost more money and I have no idea what he's going to do. The Auditor General could do it today; just give the Auditor General a broader scope of practice, and I'm certain he or she could account for the future forecasting. How much is full-day kindergarten going to cost? Were there any other options? Those are appropriate questions. Why couldn't they report to the finance and economic affairs committee?

We don't need more bureaucrats; we need less bureaucrats. We need more accountability by the ministers themselves. We had a question today on the Ornge helicopter from Mr. Klees, who has been the lead on another scandal: the Ornge helicopter scandal. There was a person who died because of a mistake from the operations of Ornge helicopter. That has been in the news for the last two to three years. It has been absolute chaos. The gas plants are just one part. eHealth is another part. The whole scandal on the gas plants is just unbelievable.

There's one more group that I think you should be aware of, and that's the people of Ontario. I talk to them regularly. People say, "Do you use social media stuff like Twitter and all that stuff?" I say, "Yes, I use social networks." I go to Tim Hortons about every single day I can, and three or four times on the weekends—different ones, from Uxbridge to Scugog and Clarington, and I talk to people. I listen to people. I say, "What's on your mind? What do you think the top issues are?" That's a social contact. This idea of tweeting and all this other stuff is not person-to-person, listening effectively and looking them in the eye and saying, "I earned your trust to be your representative." I don't sense this at all—Kathleen Wynne is a great chatterbox. She's always having these conversations—the Premier, I should say, with all respect, and I do respect that. I want to correct that.

It troubles me when these relationships from time to time are damaged. I am waiting for—our member from Nipissing is here now. He has led, on half of Tim Hudak and on behalf of our caucus, the most accountable discussion that has been held in this place certainly in the last number of years. This is on trying to bring some truth to power, that was said before, on the gas plants.

We've asked questions on it. The Premier has beguiled us by saying that it's the House leader. The House

leader says, "It's not within the scope of the charge that's laid to the committee."

I have more to say. I want to thank the staff that did a lot of the background work for us, the research paper by Jeff Parker—and the staff of the committee did a marvelous job. I was upset a couple of times, and I've made a very—and the last thing I should say is this: This whole debate has been time-allocated. It has been manipulated. They have limited the debate. In committee, they have limited the access to the information. It has been manipulated, and it is part of—what I'm trying to frame to you here: I say accountability starts here, it starts now, and I haven't seen it yet. We're dealing with the very bill that tends to deal with it.

I wish I had more time, but I do appreciate you listening respectfully.

1650

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I seek unanimous consent from the House to allow our committees to sit as per normal. I'm sorry there was a mix-up a little earlier.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The House leader of the official opposition seeks unanimous consent to convene the committee meetings—that was done earlier.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I heard a no, so it won't happen.

Continue with the debate.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** This place never ceases to amaze me, Mr. Speaker. I just have to say that—a surprise every minute.

I wanted to start by saying that if you're here for a while, you develop—all of us do—some peccadilloes. It's true. I've been here seven years; I'm into my eighth year now. So, for example, when I walk up the grand staircase, I always like to rub the shoulder of Agnes Macphail's bust there. It sounds a little racy, but just her shoulder—trust me. That's really just to honour her, but I do admit, Mr. Speaker, it's a little bit superstitious of me as well.

The other thing I do—the member from Beaches—East York always says, "Another day in paradise." My shtick is I say, "Another day, another billion," and I've said it every day, just about, I think, that I've been here.

But, in fact, I've learned I'm incorrect. It's actually more than \$1 billion for every day that we sit in this place that we spend in this place.

I want to start where the member from Durham left off to say that that's a lot of money. That's a lot of money. It's not just our money. It has really very little to do with the members in this chamber. It's the money that's worked for, paid for, by some incredibly hard-working Ontarians who don't, these days, have a lot of money to spare.

Last night, I was at a poverty forum, and I listened to people who are living on social assistance. I can tell you

that when you start to talk in the millions and billions, it's way over their head, because they're lucky to speak most weeks in the hundreds. They, too, are paying tax into the coffers of this place.

So I can see that the member from Durham and his party have a point. This is an administration—the Wynne-McGuinty administration—that has actually doubled the real debt that this province has managed to accrue. Since Confederation, we developed a debt, a real debt, and in 10 years it's been doubled. That's a substantial accomplishment, if you want to look at it that way.

My very first introduction to this place and money when I was first elected was a government that had a bit of a surplus. I think it was about \$24 million left over. There was no deficit that year; that was before the recession hit in 2008—and that money went out the window. That money went out the window.

I know that one group that received some of that money was a cricket club. It wasn't just some money they received; they received \$1 million just for asking. A cricket club received \$1 million.

Now, I can tell you that that doesn't go over very well with groups like I met with last night, that when you're trying to get by on just over \$500 a month or just over \$1,000 a month, to hear that a cricket club that asked for \$100,000 got \$1 million they didn't know what to do with, doesn't go over well.

Of course, in the years post that announcement, that \$1 million dollars seems like pretty chump change, because quite frankly, we have seen wasted in this place about \$3 billion—about \$3 billion since I've been here.

Where has the money gone? Well, there was the \$1 billion on eHealth—gone, and still no eHealth. There's about that same amount, when all the dust settles, from Ornge, and, of course, now we're looking at the movement of the power plants and what that costs. That's going up by the hundreds of millions by the day and by the account.

Some \$3 billion—do you know how many houses that could have built, Mr. Speaker? How many paycheques for those on social assistance that could have helped along? Do you know how many—for example, I had a school group here from Runnymede elementary school. They're desperate for room. They're crowded; they're living in portables. You know how many classrooms that money could have built?

Do you know that instead of, for example, delisting eye exams—which this government also has done—we could relist eye exams for those who can't afford to pay for them? The money could have gone there.

Imagine transit—the hot mess, as our leader, Andrea Horwath, describes it, of transit planning from this government. We have been through many, many ribbon-cuttings. How many ribbon-cuttings does it take to actually get something you can ride on to work? Imagine how much transit \$3 billion could have built.

So that's why the Financial Accountability Office is such a core and key demand that we in the New Democratic Party have put forward to this government. In fact,



in the last budget process, we were the ones who put forward all of the substantive motions to this government which they adopted.

I just want to kind of remind people what those were. We asked for the five-day home care guarantee. We asked for an extra \$200 for those who are living on next to nothing, on social assistance, that it not be clawed back. We asked for youth employment programs. We asked for a 15% reduction in auto insurance. And, you know, we got them—at least the promise of them. Of course, the promise of them is different than the reality of them, but we're working on it. That's where the Financial Accountability Office comes in, and it was a demand we made after, if people remember, the initial budget consultations.

By the way, we did our budget consultations with the people in Ontario. We didn't do it with the Don Drummonds, we didn't do it with the bankers, we didn't do it with the insurance companies, we didn't do it with our friends in EllisDon. We actually went out and asked people in Ontario what they needed and what they wanted, and they spoke to us, thousands of them spoke to us, and then we took that and we synthesized it into the demands we made. But what we heard from them is, "Liberals don't keep their promises. How do we know we will get our demands?" and that's where we came up with the Financial Accountability Office. So let's just talk about it.

By the way, before I go on, I want to talk about the fact that, yes, we mirrored this on the federal budget office, and the member from Durham fails to mention that that office actually called the Harper government to account in a pretty significant way. If we remember the F-35 scandal—and it was a scandal—fighter jets that their government said would cost about \$9 billion ended up being—the tab for that would have been up around the \$30-billion, \$35-billion mark, and that was done because they, in essence, had our version of the Financial Accountability Office. We wouldn't have known that.

Oh, by the way, history—history is an interesting thing. They say if you don't read it, you're doomed to repeat it. Well, again, to the member from Durham, he sat in a Conservative government that had a majority government, of course, in this province before them, that brought in closure motions all the time, time allocation motions all the time. So he can't really now say that there's a problem with time allocation motions, not based on history, anyway.

So what will this office do? Well, it is proactive. That's the joy of it. The joy of the Financial Accountability Office will be that it will be proactive, that it will look at money before it's spent, not as the Auditor General does, which is to look at what's been spent and how efficacious that was. Now, this office will look forward. It will say, "If you bring this bill in, if you put this into place or that into place, as the case may be, this is what you're going to end up spending." Boy, oh, boy, it will be interesting to see—just a thought—once this office is up and running—and by the way, it will save way more

money than it will cost. I think we've pegged the cost at around \$2.5 million, which is a lot less than other government offices. It will save that easily. Certainly the federal example has saved that easily for the taxpayers. This will save that money.

It will just be interesting; for example, if we went to the Financial Accountability Office and asked about the transportation minister's estimates on what it will cost to build a subway. That will be interesting, because we hear, certainly from our city councillor friends and others, that in fact it's a gross underestimation of what that line will actually cost. Again, this is an example of something we could check into. We could say, "Is it really \$1.4 billion or \$1.8 billion? What is it? What will it cost? What will it cost to maintain, and what will the engineering costs be?" etc. That's the kind of role that the Financial Accountability Officer can play. This is a critical role because it can save us money.

**1700**

My friends in the Progressive Conservative Party, the official opposition, should be happy, should be delighted with this. They should be dancing. The member from Durham should be doing a little jig. The Financial Accountability Office will save us money. If it's effective—and of course, we'll be watching—it should save us way more money than it will cost us. It certainly would have saved us, as I said—and I go back to that \$3-billion-and-counting mark. It certainly might have saved us many millions that could have been used to alleviate poverty, and again, I spoke to those people last night, who are living in poverty. Think about that.

Poverty is not destined to be with us. It's an aberration. It needn't happen. I've been to countries where they don't have our poverty problem. I've seen them in action. We could do that. We could get there if we managed our finances better. That's the reality. Surely and ethically, isn't that where we want to go?

I remember this government talking about a dental plan, for example. Remember the dental plan?

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Yes, a dental plan. Wouldn't it be great to be able to offer a dental plan to those who cannot afford dentistry? That would be wonderful. We could have used part of that \$3 billion to do just that. The 170,000-plus families who are waiting an average of 10 to 12 years or more for affordable housing in this province—a national disgrace—we could have used that money to house them.

This is the sad reality of those tax dollars, those precious tax dollars. Anybody who works hard can tell you, who works making an average salary in the province of Ontario and desperately tries to get by—not even those living in poverty; those who are living in the middle class, who are desperately just trying to get by, whose jobs are precarious. We know already that almost half the jobs in Ontario are precarious. When they hear about \$3 billion going nowhere, doing nothing, they want some accountability.

So again, the reason we moved on this, the reason we asked for this and the reason the government was forced to the table on this—I think in part to save their socks, of course, but also because they know the people actually want this—is this is immensely popular. People want to know, before the money goes out the window, how much it's going to cost them, and they want to rein that in. They want some control over what's going to happen.

And even to be fair, the best laid plans, you know: Sometimes you just can't predict particularly well into the future. That's why we need another set of eyes to look at what's being planned, to help with the legislative process no matter who's in government, to plan a little bit so the money that we really desperately need, we can actually use and have. That's what this is about.

I'm going to leave some time for my friends here. I'm going to leave some time for the member from Kitchener-Waterloo and also for the member from Davenport. The member from Kitchener-Waterloo, I'm sure, will want to talk about some of the amendments that were made and why.

But the critical point here really has very little to do with money and has everything to do with ethics. It has very little to do with an office and somebody sitting behind a desk and has everything to do with the people who sent us here in the first place, those who live in our constituencies, those people who have a hard time—whether they're living in poverty or they're living in the middle class—making ends meet every month, and where every added tax burden is an added tax burden. It's to them that we are accountable. That's why we truly need to be accountable, not in terms of the Auditor General or even the Ombudsman coming in and saying, "It's not working. It didn't work. This was a waste of money," but before the mistakes are made, right out of the gate. When they look at legislation and say, "This isn't going to work. This is going to cost more than projected," that's when we need that office, and that's when we need it the most.

This is a prudent move. It's a wise move. It's a move that any business and any organization would engage in, and so should we as government. It's a move that has proved its efficacy at the federal level. We know it works. That's why it upset that sitting government so much: because it works so well. We need it here, and we certainly need it in terms of some of the announcements coming from the government. To wit, I mentioned the subway, but there are many others. We need to look at those figures. We need to see if those figures are actually the real figures of what they purport to be before the money is wasted.

To all of those people who could have benefited from that \$3 billion, I say: We're changing course here. Trust me, it's only because of the work of the New Democratic Party and our colleagues that we are, because truly, we set the agenda with the last budget and truly, this is our bill. This is not an act of the government; this is an agreement with the government to act on something we came up with and we brought in.

But more importantly, we didn't do it alone. Again, thank you to all those thousands of people who we consulted with—the real people we're accountable to: the people who elected us—to bring this forward.

Here's to the Financial Accountability Office sooner rather than later. Let's get it going. Let's get it being effective.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's a pleasure to stand to talk about Bill 95. It has been quite an interesting process, actually. Really, what is happening in here today is truly an exercise in democracy. This debate on Bill 95 would not be happening if we were not in a minority government setting. Although I've been here for one year, I still remain optimistic about the way that parties can work together.

I did want to talk a little bit about the clause-by-clause process, because taking a piece of legislation, crafting it and making it stronger in the past has not always been possible because the Liberals had a majority government. I quite clearly remember four years ago, when I came to watch a piece of education legislation move through the House, and there were strong recommendations, smart, pragmatic recommendations that came from the NDP and the PCs at the time, and every suggestion was struck down because—well, because they could do that. They didn't necessarily have to listen and they didn't have to collaborate and be part of it.

I do think, though, that the minority government setting has great potential. As a New Democrat and as a representative of Kitchener-Waterloo, I'm incredibly proud that we have been able to make Bill 95, the Financial Accountability Office, a reality in the province of Ontario.

This morning, though, as we went through clause-by-clause, we were able to make it stronger for a couple of reasons. One is that we consulted with Kevin Page, who—it's been referenced already in the House—went through a very difficult and somewhat painful learning experience as the budget officer at the federal government. He served, actually, at the pleasure of the Prime Minister. That's why with this office it's so important to have that independence for the Financial Accountability Officer and to have that autonomy. This morning, as we were going through clause-by-clause, we felt as a party that we needed to embed that principle of independence and autonomy into the legislation.

For instance, this morning we expanded the scope a little bit of what information the Financial Accountability Officer could access. We used the example of the F-35. This came directly from Mr. Page when he appeared as a delegate to the committee. In that example, when Mr. Page was actually trying to get to the real cost of the F-35s, he wanted access around plane requirements, production schedules and specifications of those planes so that he could actually give an accurate financial assessment to the Prime Minister—who may or may not have been very interested in getting an accurate financial as-



sessment, but I believe that Mr. Page and the people who worked in his office were determined to do that.

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In the case of the Financial Accountability Officer here in this province, that person, he or she, whoever it may be, and the staff they work with will be able to access all information that is relevant to providing to every MPP in this House an accurate assessment and analysis of the cost of any policy going forward, be it a white paper, be it a private member's bill.

I often think that what I would like to do is find out the true cost to the people of this province of proroguing this Parliament last October, because at that time over 100 orders on the book, over a year's worth of work was actually thrown out the window. There was a cost to prorogation. There was a cost to running, there was a cost to hiding from accountability and I'm actually very curious to find out what that cost was. Certainly, that's why it's at the finance committee, and hopefully the government will call that bill at some point so we can actually have an informed debate about the rules and regulations and the role of prorogation in a parliamentary setting.

We also, this morning, were able to ensure that there would be no excuse; there would be no reason to avoid providing information to the Legislature. We ensured that private information would be protected, but it would not be an excuse for the government of the day, be it Liberal, PC or NDP. We could never use that excuse to not provide a comprehensive picture of the cost of any policy going forward. We were quite pleased that this was actually supported by all the parties in this instance.

Finally, we were able to ensure that if at any time the Financial Accountability Office is being stymied or blocked or prevented from doing its job, this Legislature has the right to know—full disclosure—and therefore the people of this province would have the right to know, to what extent the Financial Accountability Office was being blocked. I think this speaks to a broader trust issue, and my colleague from Durham who sat on the committee over the last few days and through the clause-by-clause this morning expressed great frustration. I think that frustration is real, and I think it's in our best interest as legislators to admit that there is a serious trust issue in the province of Ontario. And if one party has a problem, then we all have a problem because it undermines civic engagement. It undermines the power of our democracy.

Some people would say, "Well, why do you have to go to this length? Why do you have to go this distance to ensure that government is truly accountable?" I think the track record speaks for itself. Perhaps, not to get too partisan, the 407 is truly another example. I mean, we can talk about gas plants, we can talk about eHealth, but every time I pay to drive on the 407, I do wonder what revenue we are losing as a province because it was sold under the Mike Harris government. Wouldn't it have been an informed debate if we actually had a dollar amount that we could point to, as to the failure of that decision?

I am disappointed in some respects, though, because there are games that are being played around this office.

It's just too important; we just need to get it right. This morning, there was some filibustering and some delaying of the clause-by-clause, which was really unfortunate, because this piece of legislation will set the tone for this entire session, I believe. People want to see us getting something done. When you're working as many hours as some of us do, it feels good when you actually are productive. So I am absolutely excited by the potential of the Financial Accountability Office, and I totally disagree with the member from Durham's classification that it is just wallpaper.

If he had been able to take the time to fully read and explore and look at the research that the research staff provided MPPs with around the Financial Accountability Office, the comparative research about where an office like this has proven to be very successful in other foreign jurisdictions, there would be no question. If you were truly looking at this bill with the eyes of someone who is actually willing to get something done, then you cannot question it. It is forward-thinking. It is pragmatic.

People at the door in the by-elections, for instance—we were able to knock on the door as New Democrats during the by-elections this summer and talk about this office. People get it. The people of this province understand that this office is needed, and was probably needed a long time ago. But because it's a minority government, we get to bring it forward. We get to bring this to the House; we get to debate it; we get to make it stronger; we get to vote on it, potentially tomorrow. We need to get this office up and running.

The member from Durham called it "wallpaper"; I totally disagree. It's a pessimistic, cynical view of an office where clearly the legislation brings another level, another layer of integrity to the spending that goes on in this province.

You know, we've been asked a lot of questions, though, over the last few weeks. They say, "This could affect you. If the NDP is government in the future, you will be held to the same account," and that's good. We are not afraid of accountability. In fact, we have a very strong record across the country, provincial NDP governments, of balancing budgets, of reducing deficit and of raising the bar on accountability, and, quite honestly, I'm quite proud of that.

We have to bring forward a piece of legislation like this as a programmed time allocation because, quite honestly, for almost two years, we have over-debated, to the point of being exhausted, pieces of legislation that should have been debated for two hours. The co-operative housing is one example—I think 17 hours—a perfectly common sense piece of legislation that needn't have been dragged out to the level that it was.

So there's a good reason for the Financial Accountability Office to be a programmed motion: because it's too important to play games with. As we went through the clause-by-clause this morning and as we made this piece of legislation stronger, in a fairly collaborative way, aside from some of the game-playing, we should all be able to stand up with some sense of assurance and

pride that this is a new measure of accountability that the people of the province can look to and say, "Okay, the people that we sent here"—because we've been sent here to work for the people of this province—"have recognized that there is a trust issue in the way that this government spends money, and there is a new and a renewed effort upon all parties to reprioritize spending in the province of Ontario."

Some people—because I'm the critic for economic development and trade—have actually come out and said, "You know, this potentially could increase confidence." It should increase confidence because we are raising the bar on accountability in the economy of the province of Ontario. We have to remember that there are billions of dollars out there just sitting in corporate bank accounts that need to come into play. We can point to Bay Street, to the corporations, and say, "Listen, we are playing hardball now. We're not spending like thieves. We are not spending money without having a proper assessment of those policies. We are truly pushing ourselves collaboratively. Whether you want to come kicking or screaming, we are raising the bar on accountability, and I am absolutely proud about that." As I said, people do understand it.

I understand, though, that this has been—I understand that the PCs are actually trying to course correct a little bit, because for two years, very little has been accomplished. We've been in a stalemate. With the voting and the support of the Financial Accountability Office, there exists the potential to actually signal to businesses—small and medium-sized businesses, corporations in the province of Ontario—that we are ready to hold ourselves to the same level of account as they do. We are more understanding of the financial situation, the financial reality of this province.

You know, getting the right information is that key piece, I think. At estimates over the last few weeks, it's been very interesting to be able to question the Minister of Finance extensively about policy decisions that have, in turn, affected the financial state of this province. Just yesterday, I was asking him about, for instance, Bruce Power. Their headquarters is out of province, so Bruce Power does not pay taxes to the province of Ontario. They pay a federal tax and then they pay a provincial tax where their headquarters are, and that is part of the energy policy. The same goes for wind farms.

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We have to be cognizant of the fact that every time the government makes a policy decision on energy, on the economy, on infrastructure, on transit—those policy decisions, in the past, have not been fully accounted for. That will change with the passing of Bill 95. It has been a long, long time coming. But getting the information is key. It's the first step in the right direction.

Of late, much has been made of MPPs' rights to documentation of the business of the government. It's been a long, hard fight at the justice committee, for instance—and even at estimates. We sought some information on the full costing of the Ontario Northlander and we were

denied that access because it's another ministry. Any money that any ministry is spending in this House, from a legislative perspective, we should have a full accounting of. That's just a whole other door that will be opened to every member of this House.

Why there was some resistance at the beginning from the PCs, I personally don't understand. I think that in many respects, perhaps there is now an acknowledgement that voting against accountability is just not a good idea, and no party has a monopoly on accountability, as some parties pretend they do. I think, actually, we did push the envelope on this, and I have to give credit to our leader, Andrea Horwath, and the entire caucus, because financial accountability was the underpinning of all of the budget asks last year. When we put forward the ask to actually have a youth employment strategy, for instance, and a home care strategy, and we were trying to effect affordability for Ontarians by reducing auto insurance—these are tangible, meaningful goals that we brought to the budget discussion. But all of it was underpinned by having an effective and powerful Financial Accountability Office, because otherwise, it's just another budget cycle. And another budget cycle that does not have the strong measures of accountability has clearly not been in the best interests of the people of this province for quite some time.

I was astounded this morning, though, when the minister for corrections was mentioning the new powers that the OPP will be transferring to security guards, for instance—that it's a great idea, there's no concern around civil liberties, regardless of our entire G20 experience; and then it got spun into a youth jobs strategy for young security guards and police. I would like the costing out of that idea, for sure, because it felt to me that we were just making up policy on the fly. I think that there are some legitimate concerns around increasing the powers of security guards to those of police for the Pan Am Games, and our party is going to stay vigilant on that issue.

As we move forward as a party and as a collective of three parties in this House, we should not ignore the fact that, with every decision we make, we have a renewed focus, a higher level of accountability on the impact that those decisions have. The people in the province outside of this House, some of the people who are watching, perhaps, need to know that some of us get it. Some of us understand that the trust issues are real. Some of us understand that what people expect from us, some of us do.

#### *Interjections.*

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Oh, on this side of the House, they definitely do. People want to put their priorities first. They want to see us putting the interests of parties last and the interests of people first. I do think there is potential as we go forward.

I understand that there's a lot of frustration out there with the way that things have proceeded. But the Financial Accountability Office is an opportunity for us to course correct. It's why we hinged our support for the



2013 budget on accountability, and we are focused on making sure that those budget priorities come to fruition.

I was so impressed when Kevin Page talked about how our FAO model was better than the Parliamentary Budget Officer, and I want to leave you with this because he talked about that office at the federal level purely being—you know, on the surface, it sounded really good, and it was created by Prime Minister Harper. On the surface, actually, it sounded wonderful, but at every turn he was blocked because the facts ran counter to the partisan politics of the Conservative Party of Canada. We all need to understand and be cognizant of the fact that people have lost patience with partisan politics. They want to see that whatever policy decisions we are making, whatever legislation we are bringing forward, independent financial cost analyses of those policies need to be fully explored and fully costed out. That's a level of transparency that has not been a part of the last decade in this House; it just has not. But it is going forward.

As I said, I truly believe that this debate today, and the vote on the Financial Accountability Office, is an exercise in democracy. It's refreshing. It gives us an opportunity to refocus perhaps on the issues of poverty, the environmental issues, because we can stay focused with some confidence on private members' bills, new legislation and motions that won't cost us and the people of this province down the line, that there is some truth in the intention of the legislation that is coming forward. I'm absolutely encouraged by that.

I'm proud to be a New Democrat and stand in this House today and know that we drove the Financial Accountability Office to this place, in this time. I'm confident that once it is passed and once this office is set up, we will prevent scandals, we will save money and it will be forward-thinking. It's a long time coming, Mr. Speaker, and I'm very happy to stand in the House today and I urge everyone to support it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you, Speaker, for the opportunity to speak for the next 20 minutes to Bill 95, a bill to establish the Financial Accountability Office here in Ontario.

I'm going to start by reading a little bit of my notes, Speaker, which are the technical aspects of this bill. Ontario would be the first province to have a Financial Accountability Officer, if this bill is passed.

The Financial Accountability Officer is an officer of the Legislative Assembly. The mandate includes providing an independent analysis to the assembly about the state of the province's finances and trends in the provincial and national economies and, upon request from a member or committee of the assembly, to undertake certain research tasks or to estimate the financial costs or benefits to the province of any proposal that relates to a matter over which the Legislature has jurisdiction. The Financial Accountability Officer is required to report annually on the work of his or her office.

I want to address some points with respect to the content of the legislation a little later, Speaker, and you can imagine what those are going to be. But I would first like to take some time to address the intent of this bill and some background behind how it came into existence in the first place.

I think it can be characterized as too little too late. This legislation, sadly, is the result of one key truth which has now become evident over the past 18 months, and that is this: that the government simply cannot be trusted. They can't be trusted to tell the truth about anything, and their accounting, as we've seen time and time again, certainly can't be believed. It saddens me that we've come to the point in Ontario where the government has become so devoid of integrity that we need a Financial Accountability Office to coerce the government into doing such a simple thing as telling the truth.

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I'd like to highlight some of the many examples of why Bill 95 came into existence and how it may address similar situations in the future.

Let's start with eHealth, Speaker. I think almost everyone recalls the debacle that that exercise run by this government became, with consultants billing taxpayers for chocolate bars and the like: a billion-dollar scandal which the Liberals continue to try to shrug off to this very day. Would a Financial Accountability Office, if it had been in place then, have been able to head off this type of scandal? The hope is that it would, Speaker.

Let's go a little bit further down the road and talk about Ornge, another billion-dollar scandal. It seems like there's one of these billion-dollar scandals every year. This time, the health ministry turned a blind eye to the waste and self-serving operation of the province's air ambulance service, literally putting patients' lives at risk. For goodness' sake, they bought helicopters that were too small to enable paramedics to properly perform CPR. I stood in this Legislature after the death of several people in northern Ontario to talk about that very issue. That was part of a financial deal in which millions of dollars were paid out to a company, and for what? It's no wonder that the activities of the key figures at Ornge are the focus of an ongoing Ontario Provincial Police investigation. Would a Financial Accountability Office, as proposed in this bill, have raised the red flags early enough to catch on to and put a stop to this total disregard and abuse of the public purse of Ontario and prevent this from happening again? Again, my hope is that it would.

This, of course, leads us to the gas plants. First it was Oakville. This government continues to dodge responsibility for originally siting a gas plant where it didn't belong. Only one party put it there in the first place and only one party cancelled it, and that's the Liberal Party and the members opposite. It's truly amazing that we are coming up on the third anniversary of that cancellation and we still don't know the cost. All the documents—136,000, I believe it is now—and we still don't know the cost. We know one thing for sure, Speaker: only that it's not the \$40 million that these members I'm looking at

here continue to say it cost. They cling to this \$40-million number in a bid to keep the truth from Ontarians and to hold onto power. Again, in that context, it's worth asking: Would the Financial Accountability Officer, with the duties and responsibilities laid out in this legislation, have been able to, three years ago, start looking into the Oakville cancellation and give taxpayers a clearer view of what this would eventually cost them in the end?

Speaker, I can tell you, I have looked at many, many, many thousands of these documents that point to the cover-up of the facts. The fact of the matter is, those emails about Oakville show us that this government clearly cancelled it without having any regard for the taxpayer and the \$1 billion that I still forecast it will cost. Would that office have been able to report back with an estimate from the day it was cancelled 11 days before the election to the day of the election? Eleven days? They're all worthwhile questions to ponder, and I think we know that things may have been much different.

Speaking of the 2011 election campaign, let's spend some time talking about the Mississauga gas plant cancellation. This Premier, who was campaign co-chair for the Liberal Party in 2011, has said the gas plant cancellations were political decisions. She has admitted that. That means, again, there was no concern given to how much they were going to cost. It was all about saving five seats of Liberal members of this House, Speaker, and it almost worked. To this day, they refuse to take responsibility for siting a plant where it didn't belong. Again, only one party wanted to put it there and only one party cancelled it, and that was the Liberal Party across the aisle.

Let's recall what happened next. Construction continued on the site for two months, driving up the final cost to Ontario taxpayers. After nearly a year of legal wrangling and 10—count them: 10—side deals that we only learned about from the Auditor General, they finally reached an agreement. The cost, they said, was \$180 million. However, the proposed Financial Accountability Officer wouldn't even have had the time before the government was now changing its number: It's not 180; it's now \$190 million. That's thanks to one of those little side deals I referred to that the Auditor General disclosed in his report this past April—side deals the government did everything in its power to keep from public scrutiny, I might add.

Speaker, I stood up in this Legislature on two different occasions and asked about a \$5-million non-utility generation contract that I read about—five million. Nobody on that side would admit that that five million was additional money, part of the cancellation. They all said, "Oh, you don't know. That's nothing. It was for power." But I'll tell you, that deal, one of these terrible side deals, was offering \$5 million to a company to top up a deal. They called it a power contract, but if the government didn't need the power within a certain period of time, they got to keep the \$5 million. That's how they got around the rules and gave this company another \$5 million for absolutely nothing. That's on top of the \$150 million they gave them to pay off a \$49-million loan. It's a \$101-

million kiss for a company because these guys just did not care what it cost in their method of cancelling the power plant.

We all know what happened next. Months later, the Auditor General finally released the results of his investigation. It wasn't the \$180 million that they first said. It wasn't \$190 million either, a figure that the government knew was inaccurate way back in July of 2012, according to our documents. It was \$275 million. If you want to get into the details, it actually says it's \$350 million minus potential savings that the Ontario Power Authority believed might happen. It should be noted that the Auditor General discounted the OPA's approach in this regard, and you will soon find that it will actually be much higher than the 275. So, again, in this context, how would a Financial Accountability Office, as proposed in this legislation, have been able to provide Ontarians with an estimate of the cost the Liberals ran up cancelling this plan and cutting all those side deals?

We've been at it for almost two years now, and we still don't know the total cost of cancelling Oakville. Would perhaps just the existence of this officer have made the Liberal government think twice about some of their actions and made them put Ontario taxpayers and ratepayers first, instead of Liberal self-interest first? Again, it's interesting to ponder all these possibilities.

There's another scandal that's brewing that the government needs to address right now. If they do, they can prevent yet another Liberal billion-dollar boondoggle from happening. Of course, I'm talking about Ontario Northland. I want to take a few minutes to discuss the history for members here who are unfamiliar with northern Ontario and how a Financial Accountability Office, as described in this legislation, may have played a role all along. I am going to refer to page 96 of the 2012 budget papers. I'm going to read from here one sentence. It's about a fire sale of Ontario Northland, to which I absolutely disagree: "Once implemented, this will result in annual savings and avoid costs of approximately \$250 million over three years."

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This is a government document. This was in the budget. Then-finance minister Dwight Duncan read it, in his budget, in his calculations of how they're going to slash our deficit. It's on the backs of northern Ontario, saving \$250 million a year. Actually, if you get down into the paperwork, it's about \$265 million, but he's rounded it off for the speech portion of this.

This is where an accountability officer may well have saved the government some embarrassment. It certainly would have helped 1,000 families who live in North Bay and northern Ontario from the anguish that this Liberal government has put them through, because all this is nonsense. The saving \$265 million is absolute and utter nonsense, and perhaps a Financial Accountability Officer would have gotten to the truth earlier.

But I'm going to talk to you about the truth, because one of the benefits of this gas plant scandal is that we have received over 100,000 documents. In those were a



very interesting few pages that I'm going to read from, Speaker. This is an item headlined "Key Items with Fiscal Implications at Variance from the 2012 Budget." That's the long way of saying, "Oops. These things are above and beyond in changes to the budget. This is where we made a mistake."

Let me read to you about Ontario Northland divestment: The Ministry of Northern Development and Mines "expects to incur higher than projected transition costs as part of the divestment process," which also "may take longer than originally proposed."

So now they're talking about MNDM/Infrastructure Ontario. It is their high-range estimate, for divestment to now cost the government \$790 million.

Much has been made of saving \$265 million. We now learn, through confidential advice to cabinet that we never would have seen if it wasn't for the disclosure in the gas plant scandal—we now know there's a \$1-billion delta. The difference between saving \$265 million and spending up to \$790 million is \$1 billion.

Perhaps, had they talked to us in northern Ontario, we could have told them what they finally discovered. Again, "confidential—for discussion purposes only," this is an "Expenditure Analysis—Ministry of Northern Development and Mines." So these guys, on this side, all know about this. They've known about it for months, yet here the 1,000 families in North Bay and northern Ontario are waiting every day for news, wondering, "What's going to happen to my family? Should I buy a car? Do we put the kids in university or college?" Nothing's happening.

One company, one of the largest forestry companies in northern Ontario—in fact, when the member from Parry Sound and I took a 1,600-kilometre trip through the north and did consultations, unlike the government who made this fire sale announcement without consultations, they told us they'd stopped a \$10-million expansion because they don't know if the rail line will run: \$10 million. That may not sound a lot here in Queen's Park—they throw that around like nickels—but \$10 million in a small town around Kapuskasing is life and death to these families. Had they just talked to us, they would have learned.

Here's what they had. Here's where the \$790 million comes from: Labour and severance they put at \$25 million. Heck, anybody who lives in North Bay would have known there's a 14-year severance deal. That adds up, on the high scale, to \$450 million in severance. They've upped it to \$250 million. They call that the high end, by the way; I call this the low end. But at least they've changed it from \$25 million to \$250 million.

Post-retirement benefits: They had zero. They planned on giving no benefits to the pensioners, including the existing pensioners—zero. No benefits were going—they were going to be cut off from their benefits in northern Ontario. Had they talked to us—I have had many, many meetings with the pensioners, and we learn now, in their new documents, it's \$56 million.

Pension: This is their pension liability. Had they only ever read the North Bay Nugget, they would have known that that number is closer to \$150 million or more. We've pegged it around \$200 million.

The former Minister of Northern Development and Mines, in a North Bay Nugget article, said, "He doesn't know what he's talking about—\$200 million? He doesn't know what he's talking about. Don't listen to that Fedeli guy. He doesn't know." Their own document says it's now \$212 million. Had they only read the North Bay Nugget, they might not have been putting all these pensioners and all of their benefits at risk.

Finally, a subsidy to close—zero. This wasn't going to cost anything to close. It was all nothing, zero. It's \$72 million. You add those numbers up, Speaker, that is now \$790 million, which hopefully a Financial Accountability Office would have pegged and told us about, because these guys over on this end have done everything in their power to bury this. In fact, if you look at "Confidential advice to Cabinet" on divestment of ONTC business lines, their own finance department, the recommendation is "defer." They recommended they not, and do you know why, Speaker? Let me tell you why they said to defer.

#### *Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I would ask the House to come to order so I can hear the member for Nipissing.

I return to the member for Nipissing.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Well, you didn't listen enough because you're making the same mistakes over and over and over.

Now, the recommendation was to defer. Here's why. It says that the ministry's plan does not accommodate transition costs, which could include asset write-downs of \$215 million, severance of \$25 million, and pension liabilities of \$100 million. Back when they thought it was going to save them \$265 million, they still told them, at a savings of \$265 million, which they claimed incorrectly—even then they told them, "Defer. Don't go ahead with this," it says here, "until further due diligence and analysis of fiscal and policy implications" are understood. So they were told not to do this. They were told the number was wrong. They went ahead. They put all of these families in jeopardy. They've done it. They know they're wrong. They still haven't gone back and apologized to those families and corrected this and told the families, "This is not going to happen. We've made a drastic mistake."

Would a Financial Accountability Officer have done this? Well, we certainly would not have found this if it were not for the gas plant scandal, one of the other many scandals that this government is involved in. We learned of this egregious movement of numbers. They're \$1 billion wrong. If they go ahead with this, we may have just saved the taxpayers \$1 billion. You're welcome. We've saved you that embarrassment. We've got these numbers out now before you went ahead with that tragic divest-

ment that you planned on doing. We've saved their butts. We've saved their bacon.

I don't know if the Financial Accountability Office would have found this. We certainly found it. I don't know if they would have had as hard a time getting this kind of information from this government as we did. It took us reading over 100,000 documents before we actually got to the truth in this particular case. I have no idea whether that Financial Accountability Officer would have, but I'm certainly willing to support this. Thank you for the opportunity to bring northern Ontario to the front yet again.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I would just like to take a minute and talk about the Financial Accountability Office. One of the reasons why the NDP pushed so hard for it was the ONTC, because the government said, "We're going to save \$100 million," and everyone in northern Ontario—and I'd like to echo Mr. Fedeli—everyone in northern Ontario knew that it would cost, that it wouldn't save. It was a service we needed and it was going to cost millions. At that point, we had no one to ask except the government to prove those numbers ahead of time, before they put the families in jeopardy. At that point, we had no one to ask, and that's why the NDP, and only the NDP, pushed so hard in this minority Parliament for an accountability office so that we could demand those numbers before people's lives in the north and people's lives everywhere, but especially people's lives in the north, were put in jeopardy and are still put in jeopardy because this government has put the brakes on decisions but hasn't actually given anybody any guidance. We pushed hard for this Financial Accountability Office, and I'm very proud to be part of this party who got it done.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'm really pleased to speak to Bill 95 today at third reading, and hoping that all members will support this bill and put it into law. It's a good day in our Parliament Building in Ontario with the creation of a Financial Accountability Office. This will be a non-partisan, independent body that can look forward at legislation in a fair way and make sure that it suits the people of this province.

This is good, because when I speak to voters across this province and in Davenport, for too long people have given up hope in politicians and politics, and it's hard to blame them. It's hard to blame them when they see the kind of Liberal math that goes on in this place, the kind of crooked accounting that happens: seeing people, Liberals particularly, campaigning from the left and governing from the right, making promises when it suits them.

We need to turn this around. We need to make sure that people are engaged. We need to make sure that the money is there when we need it for the people of this province. We need to make sure that we have money for our public infrastructure, for public transit. We need to make sure that we're able to support our kids in schools, our child care system. We need to build affordable housing in this province.

This government has wasted billions of dollars, and they continue to put their own interests first. They have one lobbyist who comes in, and they pass legislation for that lobbyist. They pass Bill 115 in a couple of days. They prorogue Parliament at their own will.

The people of this province have been waiting for a long time for this place to work for them, and the Financial Accountability Office is a small piece of legislation, but a very important piece of legislation, that is going to bring accountability back to this province and some hope back to the people of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

Mr. Del Duca has moved third reading of Bill 95. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

I would like to inform the House that I have received, from the chief government whip, a deferral notice, and as such, this vote is deferred until tomorrow at the time of deferred votes.

*Third reading vote deferred.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** As per the order of the House, this House is adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1753.*



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Holyday, Douglas C. (PC)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	York–Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
<b>Oraziotti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
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Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
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<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
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Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
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Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
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Jonah Schein  
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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
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Grant Crack, Vic Dhillon  
Garfield Dunlop, Cindy Forster  
Lisa MacLeod, Amrit Mangat  
Michael Mantha  
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Bill Mauro, Phil McNeely  
Norm Miller, Jerry J. Ouellette  
Jagmeet Singh  
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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof  
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Bill Walker  
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la politique sociale**

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Bas Balkissoon, Ted Chudleigh  
Mike Colle, Vic Dhillon  
Cheri DiNovo, Ernie Hardeman  
Helena Jaczek, Jane McKenna  
Paul Miller  
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Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
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Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**



**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Thursday 26 September 2013**

**Jeudi 26 septembre 2013**

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 26 September 2013

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 26 septembre 2013

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### ORDER OF BUSINESS

**Hon. John Milloy:** I move that, notwithstanding any standing order or special order of the House, there be a timetable applied to the consideration of certain business of the House as follows:

Bill 30, Skin Cancer Prevention Act (Tanning Beds), 2013

That, when the order for third reading of Bill 30 is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

In the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

Bill 70, Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act (Spousal Exception), 2013

The Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly shall meet for one day of public hearings and one day of clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 70, An Act to amend the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991, in accordance with the motion passed by the committee on September 11, 2013; and

That upon receiving the report of the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly on Bill 70, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading; and

In the event that the committee fails to report the bill one sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading; and

The order for third reading of the bill shall be called no more than five sessional days after the bill is reported; and

When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

Bill 55, Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act, 2013

That following the completion of its consideration of Bill 70, the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly shall next meet for up to two days of public hearings and up to two days of clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 55, An Act to amend the Collection Agencies Act, the Consumer Protection Act, 2002 and the Real Estate and Business Brokers Act, 2002 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, in accordance with the motion passed by the committee on September 11, 2013; and

That upon receiving the report of the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly on Bill 55, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading; and

In the event that the committee fails to report the bill one sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading; and

The order for third reading of the bill shall be called no more than five sessional days after the bill is reported; and

When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties; and

At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

Bill 36, Local Food Act, 2013

That the Standing Committee on Social Policy shall, on its next three regular Tuesday meeting days com-



mencing in the week following passage of this motion, meet for up to two days of public hearings and one day for clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 36, An Act to enact the Local Food Act, 2013; and

The deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12 noon on the sessional day before clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

The committee shall report the bill to the House no later than the sessional day following the day on which the committee met for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That upon receiving the report of the Standing Committee on Social Policy on Bill 36, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading; and

In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on the sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading; and

The order for third reading of the bill shall be called no more than five sessional days after the bill is reported; and

When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

In the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

Bill 74, Fairness and Competitiveness in Ontario's Construction Industry Act, 2013

That the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs shall, on its next two regular meeting days commencing in the week following passage of this motion, meet for one day of public hearings and one day for clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 74, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act, 1995 to alter bargaining rights conferred by pre-1980 working agreements in the construction industry; and

The deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12 noon on the sessional day before clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

The committee shall report the bill to the House no later than the sessional day following the day on which the committee met for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That upon receiving the report of the committee on Bill 74, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading; and

In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on the sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the com-

mittee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading; and

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The order for third reading of the bill shall be called no more than five sessional days after the bill is reported; and

When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

In the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

Bill 60, Wireless Services Agreements Act, 2013

When debate on Bill 60, An Act to strengthen consumer protection with respect to consumer agreements relating to wireless services accessed from a cellular phone, smart phone or any other similar mobile device, reaches 6.5 hours, or when the member who has the floor at that point has completed his or her remarks, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment and at such time the bill shall be ordered referred to the Standing Committee on General Government; and

That the vote on second reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That the Standing Committee on General Government shall, on its next three regular meeting days commencing in the week following passage of this motion, meet for up to two days of public hearings and one day for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

The deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12:00 noon on the sessional day before clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

The committee shall report the bill to the House no later than the sessional day following the day on which the committee met for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That upon receiving the report of the committee on Bill 60, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading; and

In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on the sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading; and

The order for third reading of the bill shall be called no more than five sessional days after the bill is reported; and

When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

In the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

Bill 77, Hawkins Gignac Act (Carbon Monoxide Safety), 2013

Upon receiving second reading during private members' public business, Bill 77, An Act to amend the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 to provide safety requirements related to the presence of unsafe levels of carbon monoxide on premises, shall be referred to a standing committee in the normal way; and

Any proceedings on Bill 77 in the committee to which the bill is referred shall be postponed until completion by that committee of consideration of any other bill provided for in this motion; and

The committee to which the bill is referred is authorized to meet for one day of public hearings on the bill, during its first regularly scheduled meeting the week following the referral of the bill to the committee; and

The committee is authorized to meet for one sessional day of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill, on its next regularly scheduled meeting day during the week following the week in which the committee met for public hearings; and

The deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12 noon on the sessional day before clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

The committee shall report the bill to the House no later than the sessional day following the day on which the committee met for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That upon receiving the report of the respective committee on the bill, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading; and

In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on the sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading; and

The order for third reading of the bill shall be called no more than five sessional days after the bill is reported; and

When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

In the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

Bill 32, Registered Human Resources Professionals Act, 2013

That the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills shall, on its next three regular meeting days commencing in the week following passage of this motion, meet for up to two days for public hearings and one day for clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 32, An Act respecting the Human Resources Professionals Association; and

The deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12 noon on the sessional day before clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

The committee shall report the bill to the House no later than the sessional day following the day on which the committee met for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That upon receiving the report of the committee on Bill 32, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading; and

In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on the sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading; and

The order for third reading of the bill shall be called no more than five sessional days after the bill is reported; and

When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

In the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

Select Committee on Developmental Services

That a Select Committee on Developmental Services be appointed to consider and report to the House its observations and recommendations with respect to the urgent need for a comprehensive developmental services strategy to address the needs of children, youth and adults in Ontario with an intellectual disability or who are dually diagnosed with an intellectual disability and a mental illness, and to coordinate the delivery of developmental programs and services across many provincial ministries in addition to the Ministry of Community and Social Services; and

That in developing its strategy and recommendations, the committee shall focus on the following issues:



- the elementary and secondary school educational needs of children and youth;

- the educational and workplace needs of youth upon completion of secondary school;

- the need to provide social, recreational and inclusive opportunities for children, youth and adults;

- the need for a range of available and affordable housing options for youth and adults;

- the respite and support needs of families;

- how government should most appropriately support these needs and provide these opportunities.

That the committee have the authority to meet on Wednesdays following routine proceedings when the House is in session, and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. when the House is not in session; and

That the committee shall have the authority to call for persons, papers and things, to employ counsel and staff and, as the committee deems relevant to its terms of reference, to commission reports and adjourn from place to place, subject to the normal budget approval from the Board of Internal Economy; and

That the committee shall present an interim report to the House no later than February 26, 2014, and a final report no later than May 15, 2014; and

That in the event of and notwithstanding any prorogation of the House before the presentation of the committee's final report, the committee shall be deemed to be continued to the subsequent session or sessions and may continue to meet during any such prorogation; and

That the committee shall be comprised of: four members from the government caucus, one of whom shall be the Chair, three members from the caucus of the official opposition and two members from the caucus of the third party; and

That the chief whip of each of the recognized parties shall indicate in writing to the Clerk of the House, within five sessional days of the passage of this motion, their party's membership on the committee.

#### Royal assent

That any of the bills provided for in this motion shall, after receiving third reading, be presented to the Lieutenant Governor for royal assent no later than December 13, 2013.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Milloy has moved government notice of motion number 22.

Government House leader?

**Hon. John Milloy:** For anyone who perhaps had been tuning in on the parliamentary channel, they might have thought that I was doing my Ted Cruz impersonation this morning and trying to hold up the meeting of the House by reading a motion which I think took about 15 or 20 minutes to read into the record. But actually, while I believe Senator Cruz was trying to delay what was going on in the Senate, in fact, what we are trying to do here through this very lengthy motion is speed up the passage of legislation here in the Legislature.

#### 0920

I think members of this Legislature are quite aware that we've had a rather rocky number of months, certainly in the spring of this year. We saw the government come forward with a very robust legislative agenda, and it kept getting stonewalled at every course. We saw second reading debates on bills that were supported by all parties in this House go on and on in debate, sometimes as much as 18, 19, 20 hours before they moved forward. So, in a spirit of wanting to make the Legislature work, and work properly, our Premier, Premier Wynne, met with the Leader of the Opposition and the leader of the third party recently where she presented them with a series of bills—six bills, I believe, Mr. Speaker—that reflected the priorities of our government, but also, we felt, the priorities of the opposition, bills where there was a consensus, and asked whether it would be possible for the parties to work together to see a passage of these.

What ensued has been some back and forth between the parties, between the House leaders, and an agreement was reached between us and the official opposition. We invited the New Democratic Party to join, and certainly they've been part of the discussions. But what we have here today is a consensus between the two parties on a number of bills that we would like to see move through the Legislature over the next several months, proceed to committee if necessary and come to a vote here.

What the programming motion does is it outlines a timetable to deal with these. I want to stress to members here that what it does not do is somehow hamper debate. We put forward ample time at all stages for debate and discussion for public hearings in the case of those bills that are going to committee, opportunities for parties to come forward with amendments to strengthen the bill and to consider it. But what it will do is ensure the passage of these bills as we move forward. It will ensure that some of the game-playing that we saw this spring does not happen and that we can rise for Christmas and hopefully, if these bills are deemed to be supported by the majority of members here in this place, we will go forward having achieved a good agenda of bills moving forward.

Just to put it on the record, because there may have been one or two members who weren't following my reading of that motion with the interest that I'm sure that everyone did, I'll read it again. No, I will not. But I will just outline the bills that are included in the programming motion:

- Bill 30, Skin Cancer Prevention Act, or, as it's known, the tanning beds act;

- Bill 70, the Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act (Spousal Exception) that came from the member for Leeds–Grenville, a private member's bill dealing with the issue around dentists and the treating of spouses—something very top of mind in many circles. I'm sure all of us have heard of it at our constituency office;

- Bill 55, Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act: again a bill I think we'll find a lot of consensus on

here as it strengthens a number of consumer safety measures;

—Bill 36, the Local Food Act: again, a bill which I think there is a great deal of consensus on to strengthen the use and promotion of local food here in the province of Ontario. It's going to be a benefit to our farmers and a benefit certainly to our food industry, which is such a big, important part of our economy;

—Bill 74, Fairness and Competitiveness in Ontario's Construction Industry Act, which was again a private member's bill brought forward to address an anomaly in a particular labour agreement that has been identified by the Ontario Labour Relations Board. There has been certainly encouragement that we may need legislation to settle this issue;

—Bill 60, the Wireless Services Agreements Act: In this day and age, everyone with cellphones will certainly appreciate this piece of legislation which will allow individuals to have more protection on their cellphone bills;

—Bill 77, the Hawkins Gignac Act (Carbon Monoxide Safety) that comes from the member from Oxford. It's something that he has pushed for with great passion around the whole issue of carbon monoxide safety; and finally

—Bill 32, the Registered Human Resources Professionals Act, again a private member's bill that addresses a desire among human resources professionals to have their own association.

This, I think, is a good list of bills on which you'll find wide consensus, not only within this Legislature but within the public in general. All this motion does—and I want to give notice that we on this side of the Legislature are not going to spend a lot of time debating it, because it's a procedural motion that sets out the type of timetable that can guarantee these bills will receive due consideration and move with the normal type of speed we expect here in the Legislature.

We were a little bit disappointed, because we had asked that two other bills be added to this list: Bill 91 and Bill 105. We have been told by the opposition over and over again that they were looking for an opportunity to talk about jobs and the economy, and although that long list I read into the record does contain many bills that touch on economic issues and employment issues, Bills 91 and 105 specifically deal with a number of areas that we feel are very important to the creation of jobs.

One of them deals with the employer health tax benefit. It was contained in the budget. What we would see is an adjustment to it so that smaller businesses would gain from that tax benefit and be able to have more resources in order to create jobs and make investments.

The other one is the Waste Diversion Act, which I know my friend the Minister of the Environment will be speaking on passionately. What it does is strengthen our oversight of waste diversion and, in doing so, it has the potential to create jobs in the recycling field and also really spur and encourage innovation among a number of

industries, which in turn will create more opportunities for investment and job creation.

We had wanted these two to go on the list. We could not reach consensus, but just to note that we will be proceeding with these bills as well as the list that came forward today.

Mr. Speaker, I've spent seven or eight minutes just outlining what's going on here. This is about making sure the Legislature works a little bit better over the coming months and that we can see progress on a list of bills that, I repeat again, I think you'll find consensus on here in the Legislature, as well as broad consensus and appeal for them. With that, as I say, we're not going to spend a lot of time on this side of the House debating this motion. We feel it speaks for itself in the outline it puts forward. We look forward to debate and discussion on it, and we look forward to moving on with these bills.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I, too, am pleased to speak to this motion, which essentially is exactly the motion I presented to this House on behalf of our leader, Tim Hudak, and the Ontario PC caucus on Monday, to try to end the gridlock around here and change the agenda to jobs and the economy, rather than the past few years—certainly the past two years, and certainly the past nine months under Premier Wynne, where we've been dealing with mostly social bills.

First of all, I want to say we are not going to take a lot of time either. We'll have two speakers on this side, myself and the deputy House leader for the PCs, Mr. Clark, who has been a tremendous help in this whole process; we couldn't do it without him.

This whole motion stems from the meeting of September 11. The Premier did ask to meet with Mr. Hudak. He met with her promptly, and she gave him a list of bills. It was, I believe, at that time, six government bills and three PC bills that she considered to be priorities. We looked at it, and we thought, "Jeez, from the government side there's no bold ideas to get the economy going, to go to bat for the over 500,000 unemployed women and men who woke up this morning without a job." We have not seen, really, any bold ideas come from the Liberals at all.

**0930**

So in order to change the page—to clear the decks, as Tim says so very often—we have, basically, an unprecedented move. The government was creating its own stagnant House here and not dealing with the opposition, at least in the couple of years I've been House leader. The fact of the matter is, they were still operating as if they had a majority. They would come in, basically, to House leaders' meetings saying, "This is what we're going to do this week, boys"—it was mostly men in the room—and never actually negotiate with us. When they did finally negotiate with an opposition party, we were completely shut out of those negotiations, and that was around getting their budget passed. I will give Mr. Bisson, the House leader of the NDP, credit: He kept me informed of what they were talking about, but I was



never part of those discussions, nor their outcome. And of course we ended up getting a Financial Accountability Officer, which we agree with, but I don't think will actually ever prevent scandals like Ornge or eHealth or power plants, so I'm not sure how useful it's all going to be, but we're supportive of it anyway. And again, no job creation requests during the NDP's discussion with the government, so we had to come forward to try and change the agenda here.

Mr. Speaker, Ontario is at a crossroads. Our Legislature has been in deadlock for almost two years now as the Liberals and NDP failed to bring forward any policy ideas that would help put the over 500,000 unemployed women and men back to work in Ontario. We have a Premier who has been an integral part of a government responsible for unprecedented amounts of waste, countless scandals—I mention them again: eHealth, Ornge, power plants and many more—and deficits and debt that continue to burden the middle class. While Kathleen Wynne tries to distance herself from former Premier Dalton McGuinty and his wasteful overspending and scandals, she hopes that Ontarians forget she sat at the cabinet table when those decisions were made.

Mr. Speaker, I forgot to mention that I'll be sharing my time with the honourable member from Leeds–Grenville, and again, we won't be speaking terribly long on this; we want to get these bills passed and the agenda changed here on behalf of jobs and the economy and smaller government as quickly as possible.

Premier Wynne shares responsibility with her predecessor, Mr. McGuinty, for the mess we find ourselves in now. Unfortunately, since the 2011 election, the Liberal government has failed to implement any pieces of legislation that deal with our job and debt crises. Since Kathleen Wynne became Premier, we have seen nothing in the way of a legislative agenda or a mandate to grow the economy and create jobs.

That's why, on Monday, September 23, the Ontario PC caucus took bold action. We put forward this programming motion to end the legislative gridlock and clear the deck so that we can start dealing with the jobs and debt crisis here in Ontario. We have before us in this motion eight bills, and almost all of them were supported by all three parties—almost all of them. Kathleen Wynne, the Premier, prides herself on her willingness to engage in conversations to find solutions, but the Premier hasn't even been able deliver on her agenda of tanning beds and local food legislation.

I'm here today on behalf of Tim Hudak, our leader, and the Progressive Conservative caucus to propose a solution to this deadlocked Legislature, and get the Legislature working on behalf of the people who sent us here. This programming motion—I'll just do it for the record, as the government House leader did—would see the following eight bills expedited through the House to clear the way for a legislative agenda to deal with Ontario's jobs and debt crisis:

Bill 30, the Skin Cancer Prevention Act (Tanning Beds)—all three parties agree with that.

Bill 70, the Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act (Spousal Exception), put forward by the honourable member for Leeds–Grenville, Mr. Clark, is an excellent piece of legislation. It will particularly help dentists and other health professionals in, say, rural and remote areas, where they're the only ones in town. They should be allowed to treat their spouses.

Bill 55, the Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act—we all agree with that.

Bill 36, the Local Food Act—I'd just put the government on notice that while this programming motion doesn't contain the amendment of Mr. Bailey, the member for Sarnia–Lambton, to provide farmers with a tax credit if they donate food that might be a bit—blemished fruit, or something like that that isn't going to be put on the grocery shelves but it's perfectly good to eat and perfectly healthy, to be donated to food banks. They should get a tax credit for that to encourage that sort of behaviour. A lot of farmers are just doing it out of the goodness of their heart, but it does cost them money in terms of transportation and time and fuel to get that food to the local food bank. We'll be putting that amendment forward in committee, and it's my understanding that at least the government side of the House agrees with that amendment. So I hope they'll continue with that agreement when we vote on it during clause-by-clause at committee. We also have a second amendment by the member for Nepean–Carleton, Lisa MacLeod, to deal with food literacy that we'll be putting forward when Bill 36, the Local Food Act, gets to committee.

Bill 74, Fairness and Competitiveness in Ontario's Construction Industry, which is sponsored by Monte McNaughton, the member for Lambton–Kent–Middlesex.

Bill 60, the Wireless Services Agreements Act—we all agree with that.

Bill 77, which is the Hawkins Gignac Act, or the carbon monoxide safety act, put forward by the honourable member from Oxford, Mr. Ernie Hardeman, is an excellent piece of legislation which for new builds would require carbon monoxide detectors in homes.

Bill 32, the Registered Human Resources Professionals Act, has been kicking around a long time. It means a lot to human resources specialists and, again, it was in part co-sponsored by the honourable member for Whitby–Oshawa, Christine Elliott, on our side of the House, so all parties agree with that. It's actually a tri-sponsored bill.

I think probably the most important thing on this list is again Christine Elliott, the member for Whitby–Oshawa, finally enacting—some two years ago, I believe it was, this House voted on a resolution from Christine Elliott, the member for Whitby–Oshawa, to set up an all-party select committee to look at the services that government is providing or not providing to people with developmental disabilities. It was quite a comprehensive resolution. It passed unanimously in this House, but typical Liberal government inaction took effect and they failed, as they do on so many occasions, to live up to the expressed wishes of this House, which is their job as government. Only the government can set up, under our rules,

a select committee; the opposition can't do it. All we could do was get unanimous agreement, again, on a resolution—a very good resolution—which they totally ignored.

Tim Hudak, when he spoke with the Premier and presented her with a letter on September 11, not only included the bills that I just talked about—sorry, the Premier included the bills, but Tim, along with a bunch of other stuff that I'll talk about which deals directly with jobs and the economy and shrinking the size and cost of government, demanded that she also include the all-party select committee on developmental disabilities. So good for Tim, our leader, and good for Christine to continually push that, and thank you to the government for agreeing, finally, but you shouldn't have to be pushed in what we consider to be a no-brainer and absolutely the right thing to do. With our aging population, there are so many—frankly, a lot of them are widows or widowers sitting at home and wondering how their adult child with developmental disabilities is going to live after they pass on, after the parents pass on. That's one of the big issues that the committee will be looking at.

When the Premier met with our leader, Tim Hudak, two weeks ago, she put forward a list of government and PC bills that she considered a priority for the fall session. I've just pretty well read them out. Then the government did add two other bills in our discussions this week, and the government House leader, Mr. Milloy, just spoke about them. One was Bill 91, the waste diversion or waste management act, which frankly isn't a jobs act except it creates a lot of jobs for government bureaucrats. It sets up a whole new bureaucracy, and we're not interested in that because someone is going to have to pay those taxes. The more taxes you pay, the more jobs we kill in the private sector. It's just a vicious cycle—

#### *Interjection.*

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** —that we've been on for a decade now, Minister, and we've got to get off it. That's what this whole process is all about today: getting off that old treadmill that you guys are on, job-killing and killing the economy and being last in just about everything in a have-not province in Canada and a complete embarrassment to Confederation. We're trying to break that habit of yours over there.

The second bill that the government wanted included was Bill 32, which actually removes the exemption of the first \$400,000 in payroll for many of our large corporations—so actually their taxes go up. If their taxes go up, as Tim said in his letter to the Premier on September 11 that he handed her, that just kills jobs, as the price of the goods made by those corporations goes up and people aren't able to buy their goods and services. So people get laid off in these companies. That's not particularly helpful to the economy.

0940

The government tried to spin yesterday, and did it again today, that we tried to hold back two of their job-creating bills: one creating a massive bureaucracy that nobody wants, and the other one taking away tax exemp-

tions on the employer health tax, which is a tax we hate anyway. It was brought in by Mr. Peterson when he was Premier, and the Liberals, many years ago. It was supposed to be temporary, and it's still there—so, just clearing the record.

Tim Hudak, the leader of the PCs, has shown real leadership, and he asked me, after his meeting with the Premier, to put together this motion on behalf of the caucus and get these bills passed as quickly as possible. There is a timetable read out in the motion by the government House leader this morning, but we're willing to speed that up, even. We need to change the channel around here as quickly as possible, so maybe we'll see even more co-operation through unanimous consent in the days ahead, and we can move ahead and change the channel.

PC leader Tim Hudak also put a request, as I said, Ms. Elliott's all-party select committee, and I covered that.

I do want to thank the government House leader and his staff. I should do that; I would be remiss if I didn't. When we finally got down to the nuts and bolts on this, there were a lot of people, particularly staff, who worked quite late into the evening and early in the morning. So I thank you, John, for working on this with us. I also want to thank our PC staff; I see Adam Yahn here. Well, as usual, Alex isn't here.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** He's working.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Alex Beduz is working. Sorry, Alex; he'd kill me. But they put a lot of work in, as did Amanda Philip.

Again, I want to thank our deputy House leader, who's just a terrific person with a great background in municipal politics, and a clerk of a municipality, so he knows his stuff tremendously well, and just a great person to work with.

Again, Mr. Speaker, if we don't start to deal with the cost of government, we are reminded by Don Drummond and others that we're heading towards a \$30-billion deficit. We need to have the government start to make some tough decisions that have to be made, or we're on the road to Detroit, as Mr. Hudak always reminds us. The government has pulled from the Drummond report a lot of things that would have saved money, but they've not replaced it with anything that would counteract that, that would—"Okay, we don't like this." Mr. Drummond said if you're going to take something off the table that saves money, like the wage freeze that Mr. Hudak has been calling for, the across-the-board public sector wage freeze that's for politicians and everyone—it will save \$2 billion a year. We'll do it for two years. We start to slow down that debt clock a little bit and get headed in the right direction.

It will give us some breathing room and take pressure off taxpayers. That's the whole idea there, because we are spending, I think, \$10.6 billion a year—the third-largest ministry after health and education. Most of that money goes to China and overseas. It's just pure debt interest, and you get nothing for it. It's just an exchange of paper. There are no services, there are no new develop-



mental services for children, there are no health care services, there are no new drugs being bought out of that money. It's basically shipped out of the country, because there are very few Ontarians who actually hold Ontario paper or Ontario debt paper.

I'll just end with our jobs. Most of these were contained in the letter that Tim gave to the Premier on September 11. They were also contained between that letter and the previous two or three meetings. Tim, every time, does the same thing. He's been consistent, the leader of the Ontario PCs, in pleading with the Premier on a personal level, pleading with the Premier here, pleading with the government and those who will listen, through our 14 white papers and the 167 recommendations we have in those.

We're distilling those down to a party platform now that we'll use in the election. Some of those ideas are for reducing the size and cost of government: as I said, an immediate mandatory public sector wage freeze, reforming a public sector arbitration system that awards outsized settlements regardless of taxpayers' ability to pay, making ministers personally financially responsible for hitting fiscal targets, and enabling competition in the delivery of government services, for efficiency and innovation.

Of course, we were very disappointed that Michael Harris's bill—what riding is Michael from?

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Kitchener—Conestoga.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** From Kitchener—Conestoga; thank you—was defeated at private members' business a week ago today, which would have meant open competition. There was a great editorial—or a story, I guess—in the Windsor Star, saying "what a missed opportunity" and blaming the NDPs and the Liberals for failing to respond to the pleas of municipalities to get rid of the almost corrupt ways that they are forced to do things now and bring in transparency and openness in our tendering process.

Under reducing the size and cost of government: a top-to-bottom review of all government functions to reinvest savings in health and education. We've also been pushing, in order to power up the private sector and private sector job creation, lower taxes on job-creating businesses. We go into extensive detail on that—a flexible response of regulation and an end to red tape.

Apprenticeship reform, which we know will create almost immediately 200,000 skilled trade jobs—we need to move to a one-to-one ratio. It's ridiculous that we have three to one in many industries, trades; we have five to one. Young people—we've brought them in here before. I did a resolution on it one time during private members' bills maybe a couple of years ago, and brought in a whole gallery full of young people. In this case, they were electricians and plumbers. They were students or apprentices. They brought in the employers that were willing to hire them but couldn't hire them. They had them as a summer student, but then couldn't hire them as an apprentice to go toward the hours they need to get their licence. Every other province but Quebec has moved to one to one. Our

government is so beholden to the union bosses that it refuses to do the right thing.

Finally, I'll just mention the plan to end unsustainable solar and wind subsidies and make electricity more affordable. We couldn't be louder on this side of the House and more consistent for at least two or three years now. End the Green Energy Act; it's a huge boondoggle. Britain recently did the right thing. Their energy minister admitted it was the greatest boondoggle in the history of British politics. Billions on the line; the highest electricity prices in Canada now: 30% higher because of the crazy legislation and the path the government took us on and is still taking us on. Stop signing those 20-year contracts where you get paid up to 15 times the regular price of electricity whether or not the windmill turns, whether you produce any electricity or not. Anyway, we've been pretty clear about that, Mr. Speaker.

Finally, I just want to say that our leader, Tim Hudak, should be commended. He thought of this idea, changed the channel here, cleared the decks, and we just, as the caucus members, did the mechanics of it.

The government should have put this together a long time ago and worked co-operatively with us, but they failed to do so. So, frankly, the only ones showing real leadership in this place and on behalf of people in Ontario and actually addressing the issues affecting the people of Ontario, the real issues, such as unemployment—the greatest dignity you can give a human being is the opportunity for a job, not an opportunity for a government cheque. An opportunity to raise your family on your own and not a handout from government: That's the greatest dignity. That's the social justice we should all be dealing with.

I can remember, in the NDP, Floyd Laughren, and I think the one speech that sticks in my head—on several occasions, he would get up, as finance minister, and tell us how proud he was that one in 10 Ontarians were on social assistance, that the government was able to support them. We used to look at him like, "Wow. You're proud of how many are getting a government cheque?" We're proud of how many under Mike Harris and other Premiers, Mr. Davis and others—our measurement was how many people had the dignity of a job to raise their family, and that's what we've got to get back to.

I hope the government is listening, and I think that this programming motion that we brought forward—but, just so the people at home know, the opposition cannot actually introduce the motion. We tried, on Monday afternoon, to get unanimous consent, and we heard noes from both the Liberals and the NDP, which was a real shame. But, finally, the government did come around, and we do have it before us. We need to vote on it quickly and change the channel.

**0950**

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Leeds—Grenville.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm pleased to join in the discussion. I appreciate my House leader giving me a chance to share time with him to talk about this motion. I also want

to talk about him. He mentioned me, but when I was involved in municipal politics, I recall Jim Wilson being elected to this place in 1990. When you're a newer member—and I've been here three and a half years—you get the opportunity to work with a bunch of different people within your caucus, whether it be in committee or out in the community, so I'm quite pleased with the work that Mr. Wilson does as our House leader. He's worked, I think, tirelessly since we began this minority Parliament, and he deserves our caucus's thanks for working so hard on this motion.

Going back to my comments about being a municipal politician, I was a municipal politician when the last minority Parliament took place, and I have to tell you, I don't recall that Parliament working like this one. I have to tell you, with a bit of frustration, that I sit in this place and realize that we went months and months without having legislation passed. The House prorogued, and a number of pieces of legislation dropped off the order paper. We had some frustration leading up to our summer recess, when nothing was passed, essentially, other than the Liberal-New Democrat deal on the budget. Certainly the meeting that our leader, Tim Hudak, had with Premier Wynne didn't equate the same way that the meeting in September of this year did, I think, for our legislative calendar.

I spoke in June, the last day of our session before the summer recess, and I talked about Jim Wilson and the frustration we had on this side of the House, that there were a number of pieces of legislation we were interested in being able to clear off. I made a speech and mentioned some of those bills and also some proclamations that we couldn't even seem to agree upon, which made me sad, and certainly I felt that our constituents weren't well served by the 107 representatives not being able to find some common ground on some issues that in the House and in private members' business we seemed to all agree upon. When I went back to my riding in the summer, people asked me those types of questions: "What is the status of the Local Food Act? What is the status of some private members' business?"

Mr. Hardeman and I, for example—the member for Oxford—are pretty open about our private members' bills. We laid them on the table. Mr. Wilson, very eloquently, at House leaders, laid those bills on the table and said that those were bills that, if the other two parties agreed during private members' business, maybe we could agree upon. In fact, in both those cases, both the Hawkins Gignac bill for Mr. Hardeman and the spousal exception for myself, for regulated health professions, we actually sat down at the table with the respective ministries and were able to amend our bills to reflect what the government ministry wanted. That's unheard of, and no one knew about that choice that we made. There wasn't a peep in any media outlets about that decision on our part. We got absolutely, positively, no credit at all for all that work behind the scenes, and for some of us, that was an extremely frustrating experience.

So hats off to the member for Simcoe—Grey, Mr. Wilson, our House leader, and hats off to Tim Hudak, our leader, for starting this session differently. Mr. Wilson alluded to the meeting that Mr. Hudak and the Premier had and the letter that he penned on September 11 of this year. I just want to read the second paragraph of the letter that Mr. Hudak gave to Premier Wynne:

"At a time when over half a million of our friends, neighbours and colleagues can't find a job, I fundamentally believe that the Premier's first focus should be jobs. Nothing is more important than ensuring each Ontarian has the opportunity to provide for themselves and their family."

I think that was the premise when the meeting in September took place, that when the Premier handed our leader, the Leader of the Opposition, Tim Hudak, a letter and said, "We think there are some bills that we have some consensus on. Would you be interested in these bills moving forward?", that was a different approach.

The other thing I wanted to mention, and I know that Mr. Wilson mentioned it, were the other bills that both the NDP and the Liberals didn't support, that we felt were on the path to create jobs, things like the moratorium on wind turbines, given the frustration that communities have that aren't willing hosts; the bills that members from the PC caucus have tabled and were defeated by both parties—the Fair and Open Tendering Act that my friend the member for Kitchener—Conestoga tabled. Municipalities and school boards have communicated to me, as the municipal affairs and housing critic, that that's the playing field they want. They wanted that bill to pass. Again, when they were in the House, they were surprised that both the other two parties, the Liberals and the NDP, didn't support that.

The arbitration issue: Again, we just came from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference in August. Almost every single delegation came forward and said they were surprised that Mr. Wilson's bill was defeated, because that's an issue that was at every single council chamber at some point over the last 52 weeks.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Weren't they blaming us?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Yes, well, there were some other issues, but I think now we're on the right track back with AMO, and we hope to again have that bill resurrected in some form, to have that respectful conversation, to use some of Premier Wynne's words.

As well, the College of Trades was in that letter. I know that Garfield Dunlop, the member for—Simcoe North?

**Interjection:** Simcoe North.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Simcoe North; I got that right. He travelled all across the province. I know that people in my riding have talked about the trades tax and the College of Trades—very strong reaction, to abolish that body. Again, Mr. Hudak put that on the record when he met with the Premier.

It was quite strange: the regulation—yesterday Ms. MacLeod, the member for Nepean—Carleton, tabled a bill regarding regulation 274. I've heard that as well in my



riding, Speaker, and I was a bit surprised with the manner that the first reading was dealt with yesterday. I can't explain why that happened or whether that's a trend by the New Democrats. I hope it isn't, because I think that in this place, we've had a way to deal with legislation.

Again, the support for subways in the GTA: I put that in writing, through our leader, to the Premier. I know the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore, Mr. Holyday—I really didn't meet Mr. Holyday until during the campaign. I've come to know him a little bit since he was elected, and I have to tell you, he's a top-shelf guy. I really enjoy talking to him; I really enjoy having him as a member of our caucus. Welcome to the Ontario PC caucus.

We look at this bill—and again, I hope the New Democrats don't hold up this legislation or this motion. I hope that they will realize that in a minority Parliament, you do have to have some discussions. We've had many, many House leader meetings, and I have to tell you, if I was being totally honest with the House, it's very frustrating for me. Speaker, you're a former municipal politician as well, and I think when you're involved in that level of government, you have some compromise and some consensus. You want to get things done. I think what we're trying to do on this side of the House is to present some PMBs, like Mr. Hardeman's and my PMB, that have had some support from all three parties, that have had people in our communities come to us and say they want passed.

I know that the human resource bill was added by the government, the Registered Human Resources Professionals Act, Bill 32. I know that it was supported by all three parties. The member for Whitby-Oshawa put her name on it.

The Select Committee on Developmental Services—I have to tell you something. When I went back to the riding after the House rose for the summer, I had a very strong discussion with people who are in the developmental disabilities sector, the Community Living agencies within my riding, really wanting us to put aside partisan differences and establish that select committee.

1000

I have to tell you that I was very proud of Mr. Hudak and Mrs. Elliott when they made their questions last week in the House. They truly represented what I was hearing in my riding. I did an interview yesterday with a media outlet in North Grenville, and they were hearing the same thing: that they hope that we can put these partisan issues aside and establish this select committee. I'm very pleased that it's in this motion.

Again, I don't want the New Democrats to hold this up, because people in my community are saying that we want to move forward with that. People have seen the work that the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions did. I know that the government hasn't implemented those recommendations as fast as certainly some of us would want them to, but it was a good process, and I think we can replicate it on the all-party Select Committee on Developmental Services.

There has been some co-operation. I see the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing across the way, and I think that one of the things that debate does in this House is that it also helps to strengthen bills that are before us. The co-op bill died on the order paper when the House prorogued. The government did a little tweak to it, brought it back under Bill 14, it went through committee fairly quickly with co-operation from all three parties, it came back here, it collapsed, and I believe it's going to get royal assent today. So I think it shows that we can put some things aside.

Bill 21—I appreciate the fact that the bill was amended after it died on the order paper. I happen to think—and others may disagree, and that's their right in this House—that some of the debate that we had, that our members of the Ontario PC caucus had, helped make those changes in that bill.

People may criticize us for having debate, but I want to make sure that I put my constituents' comments on the record. I think that's part of why we're here. It may slow down the process a bit, but I'm not going to criticize democracy taking place in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. I'm not going to do that. I think we've seen it in debate here. We've seen it in committee. There have been some exceptional amendments put forward from time to time on bills to help strengthen bills based on feedback we've received in the Legislature, feedback we have in our communities and feedback we receive in committee hearings.

I think we've had a lot of debate on some of these bills. I think we've had some general consensus. It would be a shame if the Legislature would grind to a halt because of this motion, because I think there are a number of bills that have to move forward.

I remember being at the 180th anniversary of the Brockville Farmers' Market. We had a great discussion about local food and celebrating local food, and I have to tell you, somebody took me aside and said, "You Tories aren't delaying that bill, are you?" I said, "No, we want it to move forward." I'm so pleased that I can go back to the farmers' market this weekend and say that that bill was a part of this motion, because that's what the farmers were saying to me. It may not be as substantive as they want, it may not have had all of the components that they wanted, but it was a bill that they thought we should put our differences aside on and move it forward.

I'm so pleased that my former seatmate the member for Sarnia-Lambton's amendment is getting embraced by, I think, all three parties. I'll let the New Democrats speak for themselves, but I certainly heard from some of the members across on the government side that have some favour in that motion. I know a very strong view from food banks in my constituency is that they love this. They think it's a great opportunity to have a partnership between folks in the agriculture community. It's a win-win for everyone.

Again, I'm going to be very pleased to report to some of those people in my riding, because we've got a food bank expansion in Brockville. They just had a wonderful

event in Prescott for the group that deals with the South Grenville area. These are petitions on that amendment that were in food banks all across my riding, and I think that when I go back they'll be very pleased that it's here.

I just want to close with a few comments to echo what our opposition House leader has said. There has been some frustration. We've taken the bills that the Premier has put on the table, some bills that have had all-party support at least publicly during the process. I think it's now time for us to move forward to clear the decks. We've given a number of suggestions on bills that we would like to see go forward. We believe that job creation and getting our economy back is the most important thing we can do in this Legislature.

When I was a kid, this province was the envy of the country. I wore it like a badge of honour that I was from the province of Ontario. We were the manufacturing centre of this country. I want to see the day when we're firing on all cylinders again, that we're no longer the caboose that we now have become.

I would love to have Ontario be the economic engine and be able to provide employment and get those half a million people back working and get the province of Ontario to be what I want it to be, and that's the best province for this country. I'm very passionate about it. I get so mad when I'm in my riding and I have industries show me letters from New York state, chastising our province for the horrible energy rates that we now have. I just think we need to get back to basics, focus on the economy, focus on creating jobs and get some of these bills that we talk and talk and talk about supporting and clear them off the order paper and move them forward.

I want to commend our House leader, Mr. Wilson, for helping to get that process moving.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I certainly want to speak to this motion for a number of reasons, but let me just start with this: It's really kind of passing strange that the Conservatives are having to time-allocate themselves in moving business through the House. There's a certain humour that we have to take in that, saying that it is kind of odd.

So where are we at? The government has a number of bills on the order paper to which both the New Democratic Party and Conservative Party have said, "We don't have any huge opposition." I just want to go through some of them to make my point.

The government has France Gélinas' Skin Cancer Prevention Act, Bill 30. Every party in this House has said that we support it. We actually fast-tracked the legislation into committee. The committee has had its hearings. It has done its amendments to the bill. I'm not sure there were any amendments, but they went through clause-by-clause. The bill is going to get ordered to the House, to which every party has said, "We're not going to put any speakers up and we're going to pass the bill."

I've got to take it at face value when the government House leader says, "I'm not going to put up any speakers." I have to take it at face value when the Conservative

House leader says, "I'm not going to put up any speakers." There are not going to be any speakers, or a limited number of speakers. But what we've got here is the Conservatives—and I kind of understand what the government is doing, because they don't quite trust the Conservatives. Essentially, the Conservatives are saying, "The only way you can trust us is to time-allocate us. So we're going to time-allocate ourselves on bills on which we already agree." It's a ridiculous situation that we're in.

If you look at the other bills, the next on the list is the Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act, Bill 55. The Tories have put 30 speakers up on a bill that they've said they support. They've been filibustering since that bill has been at second reading. We, as New Democrats, put up, I think—I don't know. There weren't a lot. I'd have to take a look at the number. I've got the list here. Bill 55: I think we put up—I don't know—five or six by the looks of it, and we have not debated the bill. We've said, "We agree; we're done. Let the bill naturally go into committee." The Tories kept on filibustering the bill. Even though they said they supported the bill and even though they said they don't have a problem with the bill and everybody was in favour and they were going to vote for it, they time-allocated it.

My point is, here we are time-allocating in this House a bunch of bills to which the parties all agree. So I've got to come to the conclusion—and it's kind of silly, because what you've got are Conservatives time-allocating themselves because even they can't trust themselves to hold to their own agreements within their own caucus. It's absolutely ridiculous.

**1010**

So I've talked to the government House leader and I've talked to the opposition House leader, Mr. Wilson—I respect both of them immensely. They are my colleagues as House leaders, and I will not say that I have anything but respect for the positions that they have and the job that they try to do, but it is kind of passing strange. I made this point to Mr. Milloy; I'm not sure I made it to Mr. Wilson, but I'll make it here in the House. This House functions when we trust each other. This House functions when the government House leader, the opposition House leader and myself as House leader for the New Democratic Party are able to trust each other's word. When we get to the point that the Tories have to time-allocate themselves, it tells me that this place is breaking down. I think that one of the dangers that we're heading into with this kind of move of time allocation, where the Tories are time-allocating themselves on bills that, quite frankly, they agree on, is it's going to put us in a position of souring up the milk.

I'll just give you one example. Yesterday, Madame Madeleine Meilleur introduced a bill that was put forward by my colleague previously, Madame France Gélinas, in order to make the commissioner of French language services an officer of the House. We thought that that is a good idea. All of the parties in the House agreed.



We had a bit of a dilemma yesterday because when the Financial Accountability Office bill was being ordered back to the House, it comes reported back on reports by committees. The government House leader, the Tory House leader, myself and the Clerk never clued in that if the bill got ordered back into the House by committee, and by way of the programming motion we had this spring, it would have blocked the ability for the member to introduce the bill and have our ministerial statements. So we as New Democrats said, "Listen, we could be playing games in this House and do the things that we see the Conservative Party do, but we live to our agreement." I had said to the government House leader that we supported that particular initiative, so we amended our own programming motion in order to allow that debate to take place. That was the right thing to do. I would still do it today even considering what happened yesterday.

But what happened yesterday is—and this is the point that I want to make to my two honourable House leader colleagues—the two of you colluded after we did that so that the committees would not sit because you would not support each other's unanimous consent motion to allow the committees to sit. The result of the motion yesterday was that the committees could not sit, because we didn't get into orders of the day because it was reports by committees by which we were debating the Financial Accountability Office. None of you had contemplated that the committees would not sit, but because the milk got soured in this House as a result of this programming motion, Mr. Flynn got up and asked for unanimous consent, to which a Conservative member said no. Then, when Mr. Wilson got up for unanimous consent, a Liberal said no.

I have to say that you guys worked that out pretty magnificently, but the point was that this place did not function. Our committees did not sit yesterday as a result of that. Those are the kinds of things that happen around here when you get into these kinds of situations.

I'm going to get a chance to talk about the programming motion from the first year of session and the second budget, and I'll get a chance to talk to that later. Unfortunately, I've got three minutes. I want to end on this point before I start again the next time that this bill is called: Let's realize what's really going on here. The government and the Conservatives have gotten together in order to allow a boutique bill that's going to favour one employer in this province within an industry to not recognize a collective agreement of those workers. That's what this is all about. The Conservatives and the Liberals know well that that is not good for workers and it is different not good for employers, for a whole bunch of different reasons. We'll talk about that later.

So they're saying that if we can have a time allocation motion and cause a bit of a row in the House about time allocation, while people are looking over here at the time allocation motion, maybe there will be less attention paid by the media to the fact that the government and the Conservatives have colluded together in order to favour one employer to not recognize the rights of the workers

that are in a collective agreement. And why? Because Richard Brennan—I don't know if this is the truth, but Richard Brennan has been pretty clear about it in his articles: It's in order to curry favour when it comes to financial contribution to the Liberal and the Conservative parties. And I say to you, shame on you. This is just a game. Do the Tories really want to hold up skin cancer prevention bills? Do the Tories really want to hold up Steve Clark's bill for treating spouses? Do the Tories want to hold up Madame—what's her name?—Elliott's special committee she wants to create? Does the government want to hold up the food act?

You guys don't want to hold up any of it, but you're time-allocating yourselves because the Tories can't trust themselves. But I think the bigger issue is, as everybody talks about time allocation, the media is not paying as much attention to what you're doing in regard to the EllisDon bill.

*Debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands recessed until 10:30.

*The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's my privilege to invite and welcome Ken and Mary Frook, retired teachers from my riding, who live in beautiful Sauble Beach—seven miles of the greatest beach you're ever going to see. Welcome, and enjoy Queen's Park.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I would like to welcome our page Gabrielle Le Donne's family today. In the gallery, we have her father, Dino; mother, Alfreda; grandfather, Italo; grandmother, Nina; and sisters, Bridget and Claire. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** In the east members' gallery are my good friends Marg Andre, immediate past president of the Richmond Hill Chamber of Commerce and director of onrichmondhill.com, and her husband, Dr. Kurt Andre, a pediatrician practising in Richmond Hill.

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** I'd like to introduce two gentlemen from the Association for Reformed Political Action, James Van Gorp and Brian Hiemstra.

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** It is my pleasure today to welcome grade 10 students from Langstaff Secondary School in my riding of Richmond Hill, in the public gallery over there. Please join me in welcoming them.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** Today in the Legislature we have students from Victoria Park Collegiate Institute, from the beautiful riding of Don Valley East. I'd like to welcome them to the House.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'd like to welcome Caitlin Fitzgerald to the gallery today. She's a social work student from Ryerson University and working in my office.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I'm delighted to welcome to the gallery today Michael Fletcher, chair of the board of directors of the Canadian Cancer Survivor Network;

Jackie Manthorne, the president and CEO; and Mona Forrest, who is secretary to the board of directors, also of the Canadian Cancer Survivor Network. We had a great breakfast this morning. We're delighted you're with us today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further introductions?

On behalf of the member from Newmarket—Aurora: Here to observe James Prowse, our page, are his mother, Michelle Prowse; father, Ian Prowse; and brother, Nicholas Prowse. Welcome to the Legislature today. We're glad you're here.

As well, in the Speaker's gallery today, we have a wonderful delegation from the National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, members from the Senate Public Accounts Committee, the House Public Accounts Committee, the Civil Society and Donors Agency, the Federal Inland Revenue Service, and the high commission, and from the Parliament of Ottawa as accompanying people. We welcome our delegation for being here.

They did ask me how the Speaker could be so neutral. I explained it. I explained it.

There are no further introductions. It's now time for question period.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### GOVERNMENT'S AGENDA

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My question is to the Premier. On Monday I asked the Legislative Assembly to clear the decks of legislation that we had all agreed to, to move forward with a programming motion. I understand that our House leader has come to an agreement with your House leader. I'm happy to see that. The goal was to clear the decks so we could focus on the big issues: jobs and the economy.

This weekend, we put our final touches on our plan, our Paths to Prosperity, to make Ontario first in jobs and last in debt. Premier, now that we have cleared the decks, where is your plan? What are you putting on the table to make Ontario rise again?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Again, I appreciate the work of the Leader of the Opposition. This is, to my mind, how minority government has to work: There is co-operation. I'm very glad that he has responded to my proposal that we move ahead some pieces of legislation where there is agreement. Thank you very much for that.

The work that we are doing on youth unemployment, the investments that we are making to make sure that young people have support, that they get the skills training they need, the investments that we're making in infrastructure, and the supports that we're putting in place—the Minister of Finance and I had an opportunity to meet with some financial leaders this morning, talking about the single regulator, the national regulator, the agreement we've come to with British Columbia and the federal

government. That's the kind of work that needs to go forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** So I guess the Premier's answer is no jobs plan.

The whole point of the programming motion was to clear the decks and to put aside—I know your initial priorities were around teenagers' access to tanning beds, and regulations around door-to-door water heater salesmen. We've agreed to those. We're now moving those aside so we can focus on jobs and the economy.

The problem I have is that I see no new ideas coming from the Liberal benches. There are a lot of young people who have their degree, their diploma. They're full of life and expectation, looking forward to getting on with life—buying a home, advancing their career—but they're back home on Mom and Dad's couch.

Premier, respectfully, all we see from you are warmed-over NDP ideas. You've increased business taxes. You've brought in a new tax rate on income earners, a new tax bracket in the province. That's going to cost us jobs.

Let me ask you this: Why do you want to go back to the era of the NDP, when Ontario went backwards? Why don't you move forward with a new jobs plan? If you have no ideas, please take some of ours. It's time to get on with the job.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Well, it's very interesting that Janet Ecker was standing beside us this morning, and she was so supportive of the single regulator that we are advancing. She knows that that will create jobs. Confidence by international investors in the country, and in Ontario specifically; understanding that we are getting our jobs, getting our act together; understanding that there's that kind of stability—that will create jobs.

It's unfortunate that the Leader of the Opposition doesn't understand that that kind of confidence is exactly the kind of business environment that will bring investment and will create jobs.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I stand here and I congratulate Finance Minister Jim Flaherty and the federal government for bringing forward the single securities—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** It's fantastic. But what I'm not asking you, Premier, is to copy the federal Conservatives' initiative—and it's good it's moving ahead; I congratulate the finance minister—nor am I asking you to copy Andrea Horwath's program, because I think the NDP's plan to increase taxes and drive spending through the roof is dangerous for our province; it's a reckless policy. We need to go in the opposite direction.

You're either a carbon copy of the NDP or you're vacant of ideas, so let me suggest one to you. Energy is one of the most important costs of doing business. It's going through the roof on the Liberal plan. Your penchant for forcing wind turbines into communities has divided the province and, really, it's taking us over the cliff when it comes to economic policy.



So if you're out of ideas—we've cleared things aside—take one of ours. Will you stop the wind turbine movement in the province of Ontario and get energy rates under control?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Be seated, please.

Previously—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Previously, I had made a ruling and made a comment on using names instead of titles. I would ask and remind the member to do that, please. It raises the debate instead of lowers it. Please adhere to that, because it is very functional when we do it right.

Premier, please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Well, two things in response to that question: First of all, the Leader of the Opposition knows full well that the promotion of and advancement of a single securities regulator was in our budget. We said we were going to do it. We have done that; we followed through.

The second thing I want to say is that we actually proposed a couple of job-creating bills in the programming motion: the Supporting Small Businesses Act, which would actually relieve some of the pressure on small businesses and give them more capacity to hire people, and the Waste Reduction Act, which will create jobs, and neither of those was agreed to.

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I hope that once we get the programming motion through, and those bills that we can agree on, they will support us on those, because I understand they say they want to support and create an environment where jobs can be created, but we're not seeing that. So I hope they will join with us and support legislation that actually will create that environment.

## TEACHERS

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My second question is to the Premier about regulation 274. On her point that she made last, it's pretty clear that if something creates jobs or reduces spending, we'll support it, but we're not going to support NDP-lite policies that are going to kill jobs and raise taxes in the province of Ontario.

Premier, I listened to your answers closely yesterday on your new policy to have seniority rating for the only reason to hire new teachers. Let me ask you this, Premier: Can you tell us exactly how many instances of rampant nepotism you've seen that caused you to move forward with regulation 274? What exactly is the number?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** As I have said, it's very important that Ontario's teachers have a fair and consistent hiring process across all school boards. That's the fundamental principle upon which we have to base our policies. Last year, what we heard was that this was not the case, and we took action. The regulation now

ensures that teaching candidates are chosen by school boards based on a number of criteria beyond just seniority. But what we've said—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please.

Between the member from Renfrew and the Attorney General, I'm having a hard time hearing the question, so I'm going to ask both of you to tone it down, please.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** What we've said is that we're open to improvements to the regulation. Honestly, I'm not sure where the conflict is here, because we've said that we took action; we put reg. 274 in place as part of a negotiation. We believe that there are problems with it, which is why the Minister of Education is working to get input in order to make the changes and implement those changes.

I think the Leader of the Opposition needs to take yes for an answer.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** The Premier says that this is fair and consistent.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of the Environment.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Premier, there's nothing fair about the teacher of the year being bumped down to 820th on the list because of your unfair hiring policy. She says, "It's consistent"; if anything is consistent, it's consistently unfair to sideline the best teachers because you made a backroom deal with the unions.

Clearly, you couldn't answer my question about how many complaints there are on nepotism. I think that is, quite frankly, a phony excuse. It was part of your cave-in to the teachers' unions, which—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Northumberland, come to order. He's asking the question.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** —and brought in a very unfair hiring policy.

You used the word "overcorrection." I see by the minister's comments that now you have working groups and you have an expert panel to study regulation 274 to death.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Question.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** You talk about an overcorrection. Why do you need two or three panels to study this? Why don't you just do the right thing? Pass Lisa MacLeod's bill. Let's move on and put the best teachers in the classroom before our kids—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** What I said was that we need the hiring practices to be consistent and we need them to be fair. We've said that we believe there are some issues with reg. 274 that need to be corrected, so what the Minister of Education is doing is gathering the input that she needs so we can get it right, and we will get it right. I hope that the Leader of the Opposition, even though the question that he's asking is designed to undermine the relationship between government and organized labour—that's really what is at the heart of the question, but I hope the Leader of the Opposition understands that we are willing to make changes to reg. 274, that we are gathering that input and that we will implement changes, but we are going to get it right.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** The question is, why didn't the Premier get this right in the first place? Why did you bring all this in? What do we want to see? We want to see an Ontario where the teacher of the year actually can be in a job and teaching our kids, not put to the bottom of the list because he doesn't have the right connections with the teachers' union. It's just a ludicrous policy, and quite frankly, Premier, your use of the language of "over-correct" sounds positively Orwellian. I don't think you actually can demonstrate there was a problem to begin with, but if there was, why don't you solve that problem?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration will come to order. The Minister of Energy will come to order.

Please finish.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Overcorrection: That kind of double-speak could make Orwell blush. You could just do the right thing—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You have to withdraw that.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Really? You're not a fan of Orwell? Aldous Huxley? All right. I'll go with Huxley instead of Orwell. I withdraw, Speaker.

So Premier, let me just ask you directly. Instead of overcorrecting, studying panel after panel, with study after study, just do the right thing: Put the teacher of the year to work in a classroom helping other kids. Do the right thing.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The reality is that, on this side of the House, we really believe that publicly funded education can continue to improve, which is why we've made the investments that have allowed kids' test scores to go up; we've got 82% of kids graduating from high school. The plan on the—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Now it's the member from Northumberland's turn.

I want to make a point very quickly that I've kept track of who I've asked a couple of times. The next one will be a warning.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The reality, Mr. Speaker, is that the opposition's plan for education would fire

10,000 people from the system; would cancel full-day kindergarten, which is already demonstrating benefits for our youngest students; and would cut funding across the system. That's how they would improve education. We've seen that before. We know what happens to the education system when the Leader of the Opposition is in charge. We don't buy into that. We believe in the publicly funded education system. We believe in those relationships, and we believe that it can continue to improve.

#### COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My first question is to the Premier. Early today, the Liberal government put forward a motion that would ram a bill through the House at the behest of a single company, EllisDon, one of the Liberal Party's biggest donors.

Can the Premier explain why she's supporting shutting down debate to ram this bill through the House?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you to the leader of the third party for the question.

What we're engaged in right now is trying to make the minority government work. The leader of the third party knows that in the spring she and her party voted for a programming motion, because she understands, I think, fundamentally, that in order for the Parliament to work in a minority situation there has to be an agreement to move legislation ahead. So that's what we're doing. We're moving ahead bills like the Local Food Act and the act that would protect kids from getting cancer in the tanning bed situation. We're moving ahead with consumer protections, including wireless contracts. Those are the kinds of things that need to move ahead.

There are a number of different kinds of bills as part of the programming motion, and it's true that the Conservatives put up a private member's bill. We're going to work to make sure this legislation gets to the point where it can be debated and it can go to committee. That's how you make minority Parliament work.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, yesterday New Democrats asked the Premier who she had met with regarding Bill 74, a bill to help one of the Liberals' biggest donors. We didn't get an answer to that question, so can the Premier tell us today who has been lobbying her to support this bill?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Again, I will just say that there is a range of bills as part of this programming motion, Mr. Speaker. I'm on the record saying that this particular piece of legislation is about an anomalous situation that was created in the 1950s, but it needs to go to committee; it needs to be debated. We need to have a full discussion of it, so we need to move it ahead. That's what the programming motion is about. That's why the leader of the third party voted for a programming motion in the spring, because she fundamentally knows that that's how minority Parliament has to work.



We will continue to work to get legislation through to the point where it can be debated, where there can be public hearings, and I look forward to their input.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, media reports indicate that lobbyists with connections in the Liberal and Conservative Parties put this bill together to ensure quick passage for their client. The Conservatives would propose the bill—that's the way it was supposed to work—and the Liberals would help them pass it. Can the Premier tell us whether this in fact is the case?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Again, Mr. Speaker, I think it would be very helpful for us to be able to get these pieces of legislation—there's a full range of them—to the next stage.

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*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'll be an equal opportunity Speaker, because there is equal opportunity heckling going on—including the clock.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I think it would be very helpful to get these pieces of legislation to the next stage and get them to the point of having public hearings, and then I look forward to the input of the NDP and the people who are lobbying them about other pieces of legislation.

The reality is that everyone in this House meets with people from across the business and labour spectrum. We meet with people all the time, every single day, people who bring their interests to us, and we, together, have to sort out what is in the best interests of the people of Ontario. That's how government should work and that's how we're trying to make this minority—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

### COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also to the Premier, and it's a question about the government's priorities. People who elected us expect us to work hard and deliver results for them. Today, they're wondering why the Premier is bending over backwards and using extraordinary measures to ram through a bill to help one, single company out of their obligations to their employees. It looks to them like the Liberals and the Conservatives are working together to help well-connected insiders deliver for a big donor. Does the Premier have any other explanation?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. If you haven't figured it out by now, I'm trying to bring it down.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm surprised at the use of language like "extraordinary measures," when the NDP voted for a programming motion in the spring because

they understand that in a minority Parliament, in order to move legislation forward, that's what needs to be done. I am the first politician to say that I want public debate and I want an opportunity for the public to have input into legislation, which is why I want to get these pieces of legislation to the next stage, so that they can have that public input. I hope the leader of the third party fundamentally understands that that's how we need to make minority Parliament work, and I'm glad that there is the opportunity to move these pieces of legislation where there is agreement forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Mary Billon is working hard to make ends meet. She's here in the Legislature today with us. Like a lot of Ontarians, she was told that her auto insurance rates would be coming down. It's what the Premier promised in order to pass the budget. Mary was awfully surprised to see her insurance rates go up instead of down, from \$1,850 to \$2,000 a year. At the same time as Mary was working hard to pay her bills, EllisDon made more than \$2.5 billion in revenues.

Why is the Premier working with the Conservatives to help put a well-connected, billion-dollar construction firm ahead of people like Mary who make this province work?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The reality is that government has to be able to do more than one thing at a time. In fact, we are working on bringing auto insurance rates down and we've spoken to that many, many times. At the same time, we need to see pieces of legislation go through.

One of the key words that the leader of the third party used there was "construction." There are thousands of people working in construction in this province right now. I want that to continue and I just bet that some of those workers have made donations to the NDP. I just bet that they have supported the leader of the third party, and I want them to have jobs. I want them to work. I want infrastructure spending so that we can keep them at work and I would think she'd want the same thing.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Start the clock.

Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Well, Speaker, people elect their politicians to deliver results for them. I've been clear. New Democrats are going to continue to put people first. But this is what they see from Liberals: The government tells drivers they need to wait for relief. The government tells seniors they need to wait for their promised home care improvements. But when it comes to well-connected insiders and donors, the government—the Liberal government, with the help from the Conservatives—works overtime to help them out.

Why is the Premier's priority working with the Conservatives to help out their well-connected friends rather than getting the results that Ontarians deserve?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Ontarians deserve jobs. Ontarians deserve to have opportunities to support their

families, and we are working very hard to make sure that we create the environment where business can thrive so that those jobs can be created. My guess is that some of the people, like the member for London—Fanshawe and the member for London West, would have a perspective on this, and it would be one that they might want to share with the leader.

The other reality is that we all, as members of political parties, meet with people—a range of people—all the time, and having those supporters make donations is part of what we do. My understanding is that there are many companies that have donated to all three parties, including the company in question, who has donated to all three parties.

### AGGREGATE RECYCLING

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. Minister, as you know, the committee reviewing the Aggregate Resources Act is wrapping up and expects to release our report within a few weeks—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek will come to order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** And the member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek will come to order a second time.

Ask your question, please—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** And the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs will cease.

Carry on.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Thanks, Speaker.

One issue that came up very early in our review that surprised many of the members is the fact that the word “recycling” is actually not in the ARA. We’ve seen the stockpiles of aggregates, and we understand that if we allow recycled product, we can take some pressure off the need to constantly find new product. It’s good for the environment. It’s good for business. It’s good government policy.

Do you agree that encouraging the use of recycled aggregates is good policy for the government to adopt?

**Hon. David Orazietti:** I’m pleased to respond to the member’s question. I’m certainly well aware that the member has a private member’s bill advocating for this, and I thank her, in fact, for the work that she’s doing on the committee, as well as the other members who are on the committee who took the time to visit many places in Ontario and hear first-hand from residents, from businesses and other organizations and individuals about the importance of modernizing the Aggregate Resources Act.

Speaker, what I would say, with respect to the committee’s report: I’m pleased to have their final recommendations and their review completed. Our ministry will review these recommendations and look forward to presenting changes.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Thanks, Minister. As you said, I am debating, and I hope people will participate in, Bill 56, Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act, this afternoon. It would ensure that publicly funded projects cannot exclude the use of recycled product.

We all understand that MTO is actually doing a very good job. What we need to do is let the MTO’s best practices be transferred to municipalities and other publicly funded institutions.

Can I get your assurance, Minister, that you will support my private member’s bill, but that you will also move quickly to ensure that recycled product can be used for all taxpayer-funded projects?

**Hon. David Orazietti:** I don’t want to say specifically, with respect to the contents of your bill and the way that it’s worded with respect to everything that’s in it, but what I will say is—and the member quite correctly recognizes the provincial government’s, and other levels of government’s, efforts to use recycled aggregate in the construction of new highways and other roadways. It’s very important that we increase and continue to increase the use of recycled materials to reduce the impact on the environment and to reduce other negative effects on the environment.

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So what I will say is that we are committed to doing everything we can to support municipalities, to support the use of recycled material in the construction of various projects throughout the province. I think it’s certainly very important to do that. We look forward to bringing back recommendations that everyone in the House can review.

### COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** My question is to the Premier. Earlier this morning, when speaking to the media, you insisted that the EllisDon bill was a Conservative priority and that’s why you were using extraordinary measures to ram this bill through the House.

We all know there are some Conservative members who have raised very serious concerns about this bill. I know that your government House leader has been trying to get this bill passed—as your government House leader. It was the Liberal caucus that showed up en masse in this Legislature to allow this particular bill to pass when it was at second reading.

Does the Premier seriously expect people to believe that the Liberals had nothing to do with this bill?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I don’t know where to begin in terms of correcting the record of what the honourable member just said. No one is ramming anything through the House.

This morning I stood in this place and introduced a programming motion which deals with eight bills and the formation of a select committee that would look into the developmental services situation here in the province. What the motion does, as all programming motions do, is



it sets out a pathway, an agenda moving forward for debate, discussion and voting on all these issues. Nothing is being rammed through. It is a schedule that's going forward. As the Premier said, there will be plenty of opportunity for debate, discussion and votes, and in many cases, including the bill referenced by the member, public hearings into the matter.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing different from what we did this morning to what we did last spring with the support of the member who just asked the question.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Premier, you said that you were going to do things differently. You said that you would not ram bills through this House and, specifically, you would not trample on workers' rights. But suddenly, you're doing the complete opposite, and the beneficiaries happen to be one of the Liberals' biggest donors in Ontario.

So I ask again: Why has the Premier suddenly decided to cut off debate and ram this bill through the House?

**Hon. John Milloy:** I find it a little strange that this was the member who supported the government when we put forward a programming motion to pass the Financial Accountability Officer Act. At that point, when he spoke to it, I never heard him call it "ramming through the House."

We have put forward a programming motion that deals with eight bills and the creation of a select committee. In the process of examining those eight bills, there will be plenty of time for discussion, for debate and, in the case of the bill that he's speaking about, public hearings. There will be votes on the floor of this Legislature. I speak as a House leader and a parliamentarian, Mr. Speaker: Nothing gets rammed through here. There will be a vote. There are more of them than there are of us, so we're going to have to see where the chips fall on all eight of these bills that come forward. Nothing is being rammed through.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** My question today is for the Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment. We all know how important trade is for helping expand Ontario's economic reach and the province's presence on our global stage. I also know, in my role as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance, just how crucial Ontario's trading relationships are with respect to helping to stimulate our economy. Millions of people across Ontario benefit from the goods that Ontario imports, and businesses across Ontario benefit from the goods they export abroad. Recently, our government announced a new trade strategy at a reverse trade mission held right here in Toronto.

Speaker, through you to the minister, could the minister please provide an update on the recent trade announcement and what this will mean for Ontario's economy?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Thank you to the member from Vaughan for this question. I'm more than happy to inform the House today about the announcement I had the opportunity of making early this week, alongside the Premier, on Monday at the province's first-ever global export forum, attended by more than 600 businesses from across Ontario.

Our trade strategy is going to enhance Ontario's export potential through a four-pillar approach. First, we will diversify our markets, especially to emerging economies. That's where the growth is taking place and that is where we need to be. Second, we will encourage more and more of our companies and we will support them to export, especially our small and medium-sized businesses. Third, we will build Ontario's brand abroad. Lastly, we will streamline our resources to make it even easier for our businesses to trade. This strategy will help ensure that, through trade, we can grow our economy and create jobs in communities right across the province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** I thank the minister for that update. While it is great to hear how our government is strengthening our global presence through the trade strategy, there are many businesses in my riding of Vaughan that are an example of the strong network of relationships which exist with respect to international trading. Therefore, I know that many businesses located in my riding will wonder what this trade strategy might mean for them and how they may benefit from what our government is doing.

Speaker, could the minister please speak specifically to how our trading strategy will help businesses in my riding of Vaughan and the businesses across the province of Ontario?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Thank you again to the member from Vaughan and for the opportunity to speak to the specific benefits for businesses across the province.

Diversifying the markets where we export makes good business sense. It will allow companies to gain further market access to new economies, helping their businesses grow. By expanding our reach through trading centres like the upcoming opening of our international marketing centre in Brazil that's coming in January, our government helps to facilitate the trading potential of companies from Ontario.

We'll continue to help companies like North American Stamping Group, located in Woodstock; Armo Tool, in Middlesex county; companies like Conestoga Meat Packers in Breslau, a successful co-operative exporting already to 30 countries around the world; and Elmira Pet Products—four companies in southwestern Ontario that have benefited from funding from the government from the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund.

## WINE INDUSTRY

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** My question is to the Premier. In June 2012, federal Bill C-311 became law. This piece of legislation removed the federal criminal offence for

consumers ordering and/or transporting wine across provincial borders. British Columbia, Manitoba and Nova Scotia since have removed restrictive provincial barriers.

BC's Liberal Premier, Christy Clark, has even asked you personally to remove legislative barriers to inter-provincial wine trade in Ontario. Ontario has fallen behind other wine-producing provinces due to the lack of action by your government. Presently, your government is restricting adult Ontarians' freedom of choice while hindering our tourism and the small family-owned businesses that make up the vast majority of our wine and grape-growing industry.

Premier, do you think it's right that Ontario consumers do not have the same market access to wine as other wine-producing provinces?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the Minister of Finance is going to want to comment on some of the specifics, but what I want the member opposite to know is that when Premier Clark and I had our conversation at the Council of the Federation, we talked about wanting to see the wine industry in Ontario and BC and across the country grow. We want to see it expand; we absolutely do.

We are working on a new wine strategy, and I am very eager to put forward some ideas that I think would expand our industry. As part of that, having an ongoing conversation and continuing to work with the government of BC is very much on our radar.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** Ontario is the largest wine-producing province in the country. The grape-growing and wine-producing industries are of immense importance to this province. The two industries combined provide Ontarians with over 14,000 full-time jobs and provide the province with an annual tax revenue of \$444 million. In addition to this, every bottle of Ontario wine sold generates spinoff benefits worth \$40 which spread over sectors including tourism and agriculture, creating jobs and pushing our economy forward.

In British Columbia, wine sales increased after they changed their law to allow for interprovincial wine shipments. Will you support Bill 98 this afternoon and allow for Ontario wineries to benefit from interprovincial trade?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I think the member opposite, in some respects, responded to his own question by citing the fact that in Ontario, as a result of some of the parameters we've put in place and the expansion strategies that the LCBO has made to increase access and distribution—and promoting local VQA wines here in Ontario—we've been able to develop an industry. That's why we just recently opened special Our Wine Country boutiques in LCBO outlets, featuring over 500 quality wines right here from Ontario.

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We're opening these stores right across the province. We're going to continue supporting the wine industry, because you're right: This is a valuable industry for On-

tario. To provide access right across Canada, we are more than willing to buy those wines and distribute and share with the rest of Canada—and the rest of the world, for that matter.

## AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Mr. Speaker, an insurance expert showed that—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Question?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Sorry; this question is to the Premier. An insurance expert showed that auto insurance profits have been five times more than this government has claimed, and now the Premier is ramming through a Conservative motion designed to help one large corporation—particularly, a construction corporation. Ontario's large insurance and construction companies have been for decades some of the largest donors to this Liberal Party.

Why is this government continuing to support the rich and powerful over the ordinary Ontarians who are struggling to make ends meet?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Again, the member is talking about promoting and insuring and protecting consumers. That's why we've taken action for many years now to find ways to reduce the costs of claims, to fight for our consumers and protect drivers right across the province. At the same time, of course, we're dealing with a multitude of issues to promote economic growth, to promote construction and to promote jobs in this province, and that doesn't come at the exclusion of any other opportunity.

I'll say this to the member. Here is a quote from the CAA: "CAA Insurance Co. (Ontario) has applied for a rate reduction with Financial Services Commission of Ontario (FSCO) to help keep its auto insurance costs down for good drivers.... 'We applaud the provincial government on this initiative and look forward to working collaboratively with them to help bring some relief to the pocketbooks of Ontario's motorists. We share the same vision of the government to help keep insurance costs manageable for everyone.'" And it's working.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** To Ontarians, this is what the priorities look like: It seems like this government is ready to do whatever it takes to benefit large corporations—large corporate donors—but they continue to ignore the benefits or the concerns of Ontarians struggling to make ends meet, Ontarians like Mary and Mike Billon, whose insurance policy went up by 6%, from \$1,852 to \$1,995, this summer, at a time when these folks had no insurance claims, no accidents and did not change their car.

The Liberals promised to reduce auto insurance over the summer, but instead the Billons saw their insurance rates go up. At a time when millions of Ontarians are struggling to make ends meet, struggling to pay their end-of-the-month bills, why is it this government's prior-



ity to continue to shovel more favours towards its largest donors?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** One of the things that we are doing, as opposed to just talking and creating uncertainty and misinformation—the fact of the matter is that rates are going down. Here it is: The Co-operators General Insurance Co. has said “rates for private passenger automobile clients in Ontario, effective October 15,” are going down. “The Co-Operators was in a position to pass on savings to its clients due to the positive impact of the auto insurance reforms in Ontario.”

That’s not talk. That is action, action which your party acknowledges by way of a memo. I quote the NDP: “We cannot truthfully say they’ve broken a promise,” because we’re delivering results for all Ontarians.

### RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** My question is for the Minister of Research and Innovation. In this knowledge-based economy, investing in programs and projects that support research and innovation is critical. Research and innovation translate into jobs and economic growth, and provide the answers to our questions.

The path from research to commercialization is a journey with many steps along the way. As a government, it is important that we invest in all stages of research, from basic research to the commercialization and marketing of products and services.

Ontario has an impressive record when it comes to research. It is the birthplace of many important discoveries that have had huge impacts—not only in Ontario, but around the world—such as the discovery of insulin by Banting and Best.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Research and Innovation, what is our government doing to support research so that important and innovative breakthroughs are possible?

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** I thank the member from Oak Ridges–Markham for that question. Our government recognizes the importance of research and innovation for the economy of our province. Our investments include a \$126-million commitment to the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics in Waterloo that supports cutting-edge research in foundational theoretical physics. Through the Ontario Research Fund, we have invested \$1.3 billion to build research facilities in this province.

Our Early Researcher Awards program has enabled researchers to build their research teams and also train over 1,200 highly qualified researchers for this province. I am proud that our government investments have made our province a research powerhouse, not only in Canada but in the world.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** I’m so glad to hear that our government is taking steps to support innovation that will drive Ontario’s future economy and create jobs. In this global economy, it is critical that we promote collaboration and build on our research strengths. Investments in

research will help Ontario remain competitive. Our government does recognize that bringing leaders across sectors together is one of the best ways to drive innovation. Through collaboration, best practices can be shared, ideas can be exchanged and important resources pooled together.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Research and Innovation, what is our government doing to promote collaboration across sectors so that our research can be translated into commercial products and services that help create jobs and economic growth?

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** Again, I thank the member from Oak Ridges–Markham for that question. Our government recognizes the importance of investing in the research to commercialization life cycle. By bringing together our world-class researchers, leading research institutions and also a strong private sector, we are helping to turn great ideas into products and services that the world market needs and wants.

Since 2003, our government has invested approximately \$493 million to support Ontario Centres of Excellence, which are helping connect industry to researchers in our academic institutions. Also, in June 2013, we announced the Collaboration Voucher program which will help businesses of all sizes to develop and refine their products and services.

Our government is ensuring that Ontario remains the powerhouse of research in Canada and in the world.

### NATURAL GAS

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, this afternoon there will be a vote on Bill 97, the Natural Gas Superhighway Act, 2013. Bill 97 promotes the use of cleaner and more affordable liquefied natural gas as a transportation fuel for heavy-duty freight vehicles in Ontario. South of the border, private investment has spent hundreds of millions of dollars building fuel stations and developing the next generation truck engine technology that will take advantage of this clean fuel. B.C., Alberta and Quebec have already taken legislative action to support their truck industry and the economic benefits that come from it.

Premier, Ontario is late to the game. Will your government support the Natural Gas Superhighway Act and help put Ontario back in the fast lane?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I thank the member for the question and certainly for the initiative. There has been a lot of action with respect to gas and oil transportation and additional usage in the economy. We are listening to the stakeholders. We are going to look at your private member’s bill very carefully. It’s a private member’s bill, so obviously each member will be able to make their own choice on that. But there is a resurgence of the interest in natural gas for transportation. We’re following it very carefully, and we’ll continue to listen to the industry.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Back to the Premier, but through to the minister if that's the way she likes it. Minister, medium- and heavy-duty vehicles make up just 3% of the vehicles on Ontario highways today, yet they contribute over 30% of the greenhouse gas emissions that come from on-road sources. Bill 97, the Natural Gas Superhighway Act, by promoting the use of liquefied natural gas, a cleaner, next-generation transportation fuel, will help this sector of the transportation industry by cutting those emissions by over 30%.

Minister, your government talks a lot about doing what is right for the environment, but the Natural Gas Superhighway Act is where the rubber meets the road. Will you commit today to paving the way forward to the Natural Gas Superhighway Act and cleaner air for Ontario?

1120

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The principle of the private member's bill makes a lot of sense. However, we're talking about significant infrastructure investments. We're looking at the possibility of public-private partnerships. We have a lot of industry stakeholders who have spoken with the Minister of Infrastructure and with people in the Ministry of Energy. The additional use of more liquefied natural gas is an agenda item that needs to be dealt with seriously, and we are taking it seriously.

#### HEALTH CARE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre is bursting at the seams. The hospital has been forced into Code Gridlock more than 15 times since January. Nine months after the problem was supposedly fixed with a plan from the local LHIN, the situation only continues to get worse. While this government puts all of its energy into passing legislation that will benefit one Ontario construction company, more and more patients in Thunder Bay are getting care on gurneys in alcoves and waiting areas because every bed in their hospital is full. Is this the government's idea of transforming health care in the north?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** As the Premier said earlier, it is possible to do more than one thing at the same time, and that's what our government is doing. The member opposite knows that we're really working hard to improve care across the province, including Thunder Bay. In Thunder Bay, since 2003, we've built 668 new long-term-care beds. We've redeveloped 134 beds. Through the Centre of Excellence for Integrated Seniors' Services, we are in the process now of constructing a 544-bed long-term-care home in Thunder Bay. We're investing more in community care so that people can get the care they need in the most appropriate place—home, whenever possible.

I know that this is an issue that the North West LHIN and the people of Thunder Bay are working hard to resolve. We're not there yet, but we're on the way.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The reality is that hospital overcrowding is nothing new under this Liberal government. In Thunder Bay and across the province, hospitals are stuck between a rock and a hard place. Patients who should be in long-term-care facilities or getting care at home are stuck waiting in a hospital, while the patients who need to be in hospital beds are stuck waiting on gurneys in the hallways.

Will the Premier please tell us why her government is more focused on passing a bill to benefit one of their biggest donors than it is in meeting the health care needs of the people of Thunder Bay?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I think the leader of the third party would be interested to know about the progress that's being made in Thunder Bay. The ALC rate in Thunder Bay regional—that's the percentage of patients who are in hospital who could be and should be served elsewhere. There's been a 38% reduction in ALC patients between September 2010 and April of this year. We've also seen an increase of 25% in discharges to the community with supports. The right changes are being made.

This is a work in progress. The job is not done, but I can tell you that we are very much focused on reducing ALC pressures in Thunder Bay and making sure that the people in northwest Ontario get the care they need.

#### JURY SELECTION

**Ms. Mitzie Hunter:** My question is to the Attorney General. In February of this year, the province received Justice Frank Iacobucci's report, First Nations Representation on Ontario Juries. My riding of Scarborough-Guildwood is home to one of the largest urban aboriginal populations. The report made a number of recommendations, the top two of which were the establishment of both an implementation committee and an advisory committee. Addressing the under-representation of First Nations people on juries is vital to ensuring equal access to and faith in the justice system.

Speaker, through you to the minister, what steps have been taken to act on these recommendations, and what has our government done to ensure enhanced First Nations participation in Ontario's justice system?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Thanks to the member for this very, very important question. Ensuring equitable access to justice is critical to the building of a prosperous Ontario for each and every one of us. Upon receiving the report last February, my ministry immediately set to work to try to implement, as the member has already mentioned, the two main recommendations, that of setting up an implementation committee and an advisory committee.

Now, recognizing that the solutions to increasing First Nation representation on jury rolls can only occur by working directly with First Nations, we immediately met with them. We appointed a committee just last Thursday right here in Toronto made up of two co-chairs. One of the co-chairs is Deputy Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler and



the other co-chair is Irwin Glasberg, an assistant deputy minister.

It's an 11-person implementation committee with a vast variety of backgrounds and expertise. It will allow them to contribute to the development of innovative, practical ways of getting more aboriginal folks on juries. The committee is made up of an equal number of—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Ms. Mitzie Hunter:** It is good to hear that this government is taking meaningful steps towards effecting a real, positive change in the way First Nations participate in Ontario's justice system, specifically in enhancing participation on juries. It is important to the people in my riding of Scarborough-Guildwood that focus and attention be given to get this right.

In Ontario, First Nations people are significantly over-represented in prisons, yet they are significantly under-represented on juries, as well as among all those who work in the administration of justice in this province, whether as court officials, prosecutors, defence counsel or judges. I also know that in my riding and throughout this province, aboriginal peoples constitute the fastest-growing population within our population, with a median age that is significantly lower than the median age of the rest of the population.

Given these realities, will the minister further tell this House what the government is doing to address these issues and ensure First Nations people receive equal access to justice?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I'd like to refer the supplementary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** Speaker, ensuring equitable access to justice is critical. It's fundamental to building a fair and prosperous society in Ontario. I have every confidence that this committee, with such very strong First Nations involvement, will provide the best advice and the best leadership to ensure that First Nations have meaningful representation on juries.

But Speaker, it goes beyond just ensuring greater First Nation representation on juries. The work of this committee is equally important in supporting all the efforts to ensure that First Nations individuals know they are a necessary and a vital part of the administration of justice. The administration of law and of justice begins with faith in the justice system. Without faith in the system, all else fails.

I'm supporting entirely everything the Attorney General is doing to ensure that First Nations have adequate representation on juries.

#### HOSPITAL SERVICES

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My question is to the Premier. It's important for us to spend within our means. That way, we can afford the things we care about. Every dollar wasted, every dollar in debt interest, wouldn't go into priorities like helping out special-needs children or building

new hospitals, like the West Lincoln Memorial Hospital, or a new hospital in south Niagara.

On May 3, 2012, Dr. Kevin Smith came up with his report around the Niagara Health System, and I commend you. I think Dr. Kevin Smith was an astute choice in that position. One of his recommendations was to build a new south Niagara hospital. I think of my parents, who are in good shape but will eventually need those services, and their neighbours and friends. Down the road, they're going to need a hospital that was actually built in this century, not halfway through the last—a modern facility that will do justice to the incredible skilled nurses and personal support workers we have in our hospitals.

I support the new hospital in south Niagara. Why, after a year and a half, haven't you?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, this is a stunning change of position and one that I welcome. I do want to acknowledge the exceptionally fine work that Dr. Kevin Smith has done in the Niagara Health System. I think it's fair to say now that the people of Niagara are getting better care and feeling more confident in their health care system.

The issue of the hospital—I think some of us will remember that it wasn't very long ago where the position of the Leader of the Opposition was to not build any more hospitals, including the one in West Lincoln, because there just wasn't enough money. I do remember very clearly that there was a budget we voted on that included funding for capital projects, and the party voted against that bill.

1130

I welcome the support. This is great news. We will continue to work to improve care in Niagara.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** It's unfortunate that the Minister of Health makes remarks that she knows are not in keeping with the facts, Speaker. I remain a champion of the West Lincoln Memorial Hospital, of the south Niagara site. I've been on the record for that. The problem is that you waste so much money, you don't set priorities, or you fund projects simply in Liberal ridings.

Let me make this case: I'm puzzled as to why the Liberals and the NDP are opposing the south Niagara hospital. Dr. Kevin Smith has said that an investment of \$850 million over the next 30 years is cheaper than spending \$1.1 billion to refurbish the Welland, Fort Erie, Port Colborne and Niagara Falls sites. He also makes the case that it will save \$10 million a year in operating expenses by consolidating, which means better health care for patients.

Let's stop making decisions based on politics. Let's set priorities. Why don't you move ahead with the West Lincoln? At the same time, after a year and a half of dithering and delay, why don't you get behind the people of south Niagara and say yes to a hospital built in this century, not halfway through the last?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I welcome the new and improved Leader of the Opposition, who actually believes in investing in capital infrastructure.

The member opposite knows that there are many steps that must be taken in order to make a big decision about a big capital investment like a new hospital, and there is a very lively conversation under way. I think the member from Welland would say that there's not unanimity around the decision to build a single hospital in south Niagara.

As NHS gets the new leadership in place, we will be looking for proposals from the hospital, from the LHIN, on what services would be included in a new hospital. No decision has been made because no proposal has been received. But we do know there's much conversation happening in Niagara. I'm happy that the Leader of the Opposition has weighed in to this debate.

#### ONTARIO MUNICIPAL BOARD

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Toronto's chief planner is conducting a planning study of the Bathurst Street area in my riding. RioCan, a developer, wants to bypass the planning process and has asked the Ontario Municipal Board for an exemption from the interim control bylaw. It wants to push ahead with a big-box retail development, with a massive parking lot, on one of the most congested streets in Toronto.

My question: Why are developers and construction companies like RioCan and EllisDon able to rush to the head of the line with this government while communities must wait for much-needed reforms of the Ontario Municipal Board?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I want to thank the member from Trinity-Spadina for the question. Obviously, he knows I will not be speaking about a case that's before the OMB currently.

I appreciate the conversations we've had about the Ontario Municipal Board and about the planning system and his desire to make the system stronger. Certainly, we believe that the OMB plays an important role in land use planning issues and hearing those appeals, and certainly we try to provide some balance to land use planning around the province.

I look forward to any advice he has with regard to the consultation we will have on land use planning going forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** The Ontario Municipal Board recently approved a 26-storey tower on Front Street East, in part of the historical old town of York. It overruled the city's planning staff, city heritage experts, as well as the city's design review panel. The Ontario Municipal Board dismissed the planning expertise of some of Toronto's most respected architects, planners and historical conservationists.

When will the government rein in the arrogant and unaccountable Ontario Municipal Board and put com-

munities first, not large construction companies and developers?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** Obviously, you're talking about a specific issue, and I appreciate the question from the member. We believe that local government has an opportunity to set up local appeal boards if they choose, and we've created a number of tools for our municipalities.

But we also recognize that there can be opportunities for a better process, and that's why I look forward to hearing from community groups, from municipalities, from a number of stakeholders. I heard from BILD and OHBA last Friday about their concerns with the Ontario Municipal Board, and I look forward to your advice going forward into the consultation in the fall.

#### CONDOMINIUM LEGISLATION

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** My question is to the Minister of Consumer Services. As you know, I represent the downtown core of Ontario's third-largest city, so it's no surprise that I have my share of condominiums in my riding, and I also get my share of complaints from condo owners. A number of those complaints seem to revolve around the condo manager. Anybody who has lived in a condominium knows that a good condo manager can make a building and a poor one can break it.

Given the key role condominium managers play in the lives of condo owners, how do we know these individuals are qualified to be in the positions they are in? The job of a condominium manager comes with great responsibilities, so how does one know that their manager is qualified and effective in that role?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** The member from Mississauga East-Cooksville is quite right to be concerned about qualifications of condo managers, also known as property managers. They have a huge role to play in condominium communities.

As she mentioned, in stage 1 of our process to review the Condominium Act, this is a concern that was repeatedly raised—the issue of property managers, or condo managers—and the property managers themselves have raised this issue. They want to see standards and licensing for people in this area. That's why our government took an early step in the condo review to announce our intentions to establish these kinds of standards, to modernize the Condominium Act.

On Tuesday of this week, we released stage 2 of the condo review process. It's on track. The qualifications of property managers were highlighted in that review. This is very important to Ontarians, because property managers do affect the quality of life for condo dwellers, and we have to ensure they have the right qualifications to carry out that responsibility.

So we're moving forward, we're on time with this, Speaker, and I look forward to reporting more to the House later.



## DEFERRED VOTES

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY  
OFFICER ACT, 2013LOI DE 2013 SUR LE DIRECTEUR  
DE LA RESPONSABILITÉ FINANCIÈRE

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 95, An Act to establish a Financial Accountability Officer / Projet de loi 95, Loi créant le poste de directeur de la responsabilité financière.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1137 to 1142.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Would the members take their seats, please. All members take their seats, please.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It could be a rush to be last.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'll wait and see, too.

On September 25, Mr. Del Duca moved third reading of Bill 95.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

## Ayes

Albanese, Laura  
Armstrong, Teresa J.  
Arnott, Ted  
Bailey, Robert  
Balkissoon, Bas  
Bartolucci, Rick  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bisson, Gilles  
Bradley, James J.  
Campbell, Sarah  
Chan, Michael  
Chiarelli, Bob  
Chudleigh, Ted  
Clark, Steve  
Colle, Mike  
Coteau, Michael  
Crack, Grant  
Damerla, Dipika  
Del Duca, Steven  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic  
Dickson, Joe  
DiNovo, Cheri  
Duguid, Brad  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Elliott, Christine  
Fedeli, Victor  
Fife, Catherine  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Forster, Cindy

Fraser, John  
Gerretsen, John  
Gélinas, France  
Hardeman, Ernie  
Harris, Michael  
Holyday, Douglas C.  
Horwath, Andrea  
Hoskins, Eric  
Hudak, Tim  
Hunter, Mitzie  
Jackson, Rod  
Jaczek, Helena  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Jones, Sylvia  
Kwinter, Monte  
Leone, Rob  
MacCharles, Tracy  
MacLaren, Jack  
Mangat, Amrit  
Mantha, Michael  
Marchese, Rosario  
Matthews, Deborah  
McDonell, Jim  
McKenna, Jane  
McMeekin, Ted  
McNaughton, Monte  
McNeely, Phil  
Meilleur, Madeleine  
Miller, Norm  
Miller, Paul

Milligan, Rob E.  
Milloy, John  
Moridi, Reza  
Munro, Julia  
Naqvi, Yasir  
Nicholls, Rick  
O'Toole, John  
Orazielti, David  
Ouellette, Jerry J.  
Pettapiece, Randy  
Piruzza, Teresa  
Prue, Michael  
Sattler, Peggy  
Schein, Jonah  
Scott, Laurie  
Sergio, Mario  
Shurman, Peter  
Singh, Jagmeet  
Smith, Todd  
Sousa, Charles  
Tabuns, Peter  
Taylor, Monique  
Vanthof, John  
Walker, Bill  
Wilson, Jim  
Wong, Soo  
Wynne, Kathleen O.  
Yakabuski, John  
Zimmer, David

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 89; the nays are 0.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

*Third reading agreed to.*

## VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore on a point of order.

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** In the members' west gallery, it's my pleasure to introduce Rida Ali. Rida is the secretary of the University of Toronto Campus Conservatives. She's an absolutely delightful, charming young lady. She helped in my campaign, and I'm just delighted to see her here today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton on a point of order.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I'd also like to introduce Mary and Mark Billon in the gallery today, who are guests from my riding.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Mississauga East–Cooksville on a point of order.

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** I'd like to take the opportunity to introduce my guests from the Gujarati Seniors Samaj of Mississauga, who are in the west lobby. I think there are about 30 of them there. Welcome.

## ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Toronto–Danforth on a point of order.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I have a point of order: More than 24 seasonal days have passed, and I am still awaiting an answer for written questions 299, 300 and 301 from the Minister of Energy on the cost of refurbishing the Darlington nuclear power plant.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Save and except that point of order, the others were not a point of order, but we welcome our guests.

That's a point of order, and I'm going to encourage the answers to come forthwith. We'll see to that answer.

This House stands recessed until 1 p.m.

*The House recessed from 1148 to 1300.*

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

## PITT HOPKINS SYNDROME

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** September 18 marked the first annual International Day of Recognition for Pitt Hopkins Syndrome. Pitt Hopkins syndrome is a neurodevelopmental disorder caused by a spontaneous alteration of the 18th chromosome. There is currently no known cause or cure.

To improve awareness of the 18th chromosome, the Pitt Hopkins Research Foundation chose September 18 as the first annual awareness day.

We are told there are approximately 250 diagnosed cases of Pitt Hopkins syndrome worldwide.

Mitchell Hainer, one of my young constituents from St. Marys, is one of the 250 diagnosed cases of Pitt Hopkins syndrome. I understand that Mitchell is one of only four children in Ontario with Pitt Hopkins syndrome. Mitchell and his family, Lynn, Rick and Johanna, have been champions of awareness and accessibility.

Today, I want to recognize the town of St. Marys, where council unanimously declared September 18 as Pitt Hopkins Awareness Day. September 18 will now commemorate the challenges and achievements of Mitchell Hainer and all those who live with Pitt Hopkins syndrome.

I hope all members will join me in supporting the first annual International Day of Recognition for Pitt Hopkins Syndrome and all of the tireless advocates working towards a common goal of a cure.

I also want to thank my colleague the member for Whitby—Oshawa for her leadership in addressing the need for improved developmental services.

I am disappointed that, last week, the government further delayed establishing a Select Committee on Developmental Services. However, I am encouraged by the—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Members' statements.

#### RUN FOR VAUGHAN

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** It is a pleasure for me, as always, to rise in the House today to update folks across the chamber regarding a wonderful event that is happening in my community of Vaughan this coming weekend.

This Sunday, September 29, marks the ninth annual Run for Vaughan. I remember when this particular event was first launched back in 2003; that's a year that means a lot to those of us on this side of the House. That happened to coincide with another first—the first year that the Liberal Party took back power here in the province of Ontario. It's been an incredible decade ever since, but I digress.

The Run for Vaughan itself was an incredible idea, developed by people in my community from the Ahmadiyya Muslim community, to bring together people across the riding in support of a very important cause, the future Mackenzie Vaughan hospital. At the time of its first introduction, the hospital project was merely a dream for our community. As the current member of provincial Parliament for Vaughan, however, I am proud to say that this hospital is now becoming a reality. With the addition of the \$49.7-million planning grant we received on April 10 of this year, our hospital in Vaughan is well on track to go to tender in 2014-15.

This particular event, the Run for Vaughan, is very near and dear to my community because it brings together, as I said, residents from across the community of

Vaughan to support the development of our future hospital.

Over 1,000 participants run in the 10-kilometre, five-kilometre and one-kilometre family fun run every year, and since its inception in 2003, this event has raised \$325,000 for the future Vaughan hospital. I want to thank all the organizers and volunteers, and I wish them all the very best of luck—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Members' statements.

#### DAVE NICHOL

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** It's my pleasure to rise today and say a few words to honour a great man born in my riding of Chatham—Kent—Essex. Dave Nichol, former president of Loblaw supermarkets, passed away on Sunday with his family and friends by his side.

The Chatham, Ontario, native appeared in TV ads promoting President's Choice and No Name brands in the 1980s and 1990s. It was during that time that Mr. Nichol helped solidify a brand that changed the way Canadians eat, encouraging us to expand our horizons beyond the usual meat-and-potatoes diet. A constant visionary, he travelled the globe and brought wonderful food and products from exotic markets to our dinner tables.

The PC brand endures to this day, and many products that Dave Nichol introduced still find themselves at home on Loblaw's shelves. In fact, the President's Choice The Decadent Chocolate Chip Cookie enjoyed its 25th anniversary this year.

Just last year, my hometown of Chatham won a nationwide President's Choice contest for a 5,000-person community barbecue event. While we may not have realized it at that time, a truly iconic Canadian brand had come home that day.

Dave's trail-blazing spirit and commitment to hard work will serve as an example for all of us of great things Ontarians can achieve.

Prior to my political career I was a speaker and a trainer, and I was often asked, especially in the Toronto area, if Dave Nichol was my brother. With a gentle smile on my face, I would say, "No, we're not related. The spelling is different."

To the brother I never had—and on behalf of Tim Hudak and the entire PC caucus, we extend our most sincere condolences to the family and friends of Mr. PC, Dave Nichol.

#### ONTARIO RANGER PROGRAM

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I rise today in the House to ask the government to reconsider the decision to cancel the Ontario Ranger Program. For those unfamiliar with the program, it was initiated in 1944, and since then, over 78,000 young lives have been changed because of it. Seventeen-year-olds could apply to be placed in camps to spend the summer far from home in parts of the province they had never seen.



It was no summer vacation. These kids worked for their pay and they paid for their board. They did maintenance in provincial parks like Esker Lakes, picked up litter, and dug latrines. In our area, they did cleanup on some of our beautiful canoe routes like the Wendigo chain. They learned how to camp, how to fish and how to make s'mores, and they formed lifelong friendships and bonds that have helped unite our province.

The unique aspect of the program was that kids who lived in the south were placed in the north and kids who lived in the north were placed in the south. Someone who had never been outside Toronto could hear the call of a loon for the first time and see the majestic old-growth eastern white pines, our provincial tree. Likewise, some of the kids from the north got to see traffic or the CN Tower for the first time.

Some of the members here have been part of the program.

Really, in our era of regionalism, programs like this brought people together when they were young.

I'd please urge the government to reconsider. This is a program that united our province.

#### NORTH REGION BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** I rise today to recognize a non-profit organization that is doing an outstanding job serving the youth in my community of York South-Weston. On September 21, I was pleased to officially recognize the hard work of the North Region Basketball Association, which has received a grant from the Ontario Trillium fund.

The North Region Basketball Association is delivering an innovative after-school program that combines tutoring with sports to benefit the health and well-being of our youth. This program allows our youth to build self-esteem and learn social skills and the importance of teamwork.

The program also gives opportunities for youth looking to gain skills in mentoring, coaching and officiating. In addition, it will help youth who want to pursue potential career opportunities through post-secondary schooling but lack the financial means to do so.

I want to personally thank Nick Biagini and Joe Gagliardi, who founded this non-profit sports organization. Through their collective efforts, over 500 youth between the ages of seven and 18 will now benefit by having access to after-school tutoring, fitness, and youth job training.

The program will be delivered at Chaminade College School, Amesbury Middle School and Immaculate Conception Catholic Elementary School, among others.

I am proud to have the North Region Basketball Association as part of the York South-Weston community.

#### WELLESLEY APPLE BUTTER AND CHEESE FESTIVAL

**Mr. Michael Harris:** This weekend is the 38th annual Wellesley Apple Butter and Cheese Festival. Since 1976, the township of Wellesley has welcomed guests from far and wide to sample local apples, butter and cheeses. As the MPP for Kitchener-Conestoga, I have been proud to attend this festival for the past few years. I do have to say with some local pride that the festival's products are some of the best around. There's nothing quite like the taste of farm-fresh apples and local cheeses.

I would like to commend all the groups involved, including the board of trade, which hosts the pancake and sausage breakfast, which I'll be serving at on Saturday at 7 a.m.; the Optimist Club, serving schnitzel on a bun; the Lutheran churches, which, of course, sell apple dumpplings; and the Mennonite churches, which sell delicious apple fritters along the main street during the festival.

One of my favourite parts of this event is the smorgasbord dinner of Waterloo county, which includes a wide variety of home cooking, such as pigtails, roast beef, spareribs and sauerkraut.

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I am so proud to have this wonderful festival in my riding and to see the sense of community it inspires by bringing local farmers together with their urban counterparts to put on a great and unforgettable time.

I encourage you all to come on out to Wellesley this weekend and enjoy the 38th annual Wellesley Apple Butter and Cheese Festival. My colleague federal MP Harold Albrecht and I will be serving pancakes at 7 a.m., and we hope to see you there.

#### ART IN THE PARK

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** It is my privilege to share with the members of this Legislature the details of the second annual Art in the Park festival that took place in London-Fanshawe at Kiwanis Park this past August.

Last year's festival was a great success, but this year was even more successful, with more vendors and even more local talent. Art in the Park gives local artisans an opportunity to showcase their arts, crafts and talents with people in the community. We were lucky enough to have two local artists promoting their newly published novels. J.A. De Yoe was there with *The Weight of Innocence*, and Michelle Proulx with *Imminent Danger* and *How to Fly Straight Into It*.

Of course, this fun festival would not be successful without the many volunteers who generously donate their time to bring arts and culture to our community. I would like to acknowledge Rev. Paul Browning and the Trinity United Church, Nancy McSloy from Discover Argyle, the Argyle Community Association, and the city of London. Also, I want to acknowledge the many volunteers who turned hot dogs on the barbecue all day in 35 degree weather, along with various bands who entertained the crowd throughout the day.

The day concluded with a movie in the park at dusk. Families were able to bring their lawn chairs and blankets and were provided with a free movie and a chance to spend some time with their loved ones.

I would again like to give a big thank you to everyone involved with organizing this festival, and I would like to express how fortunate we are to have events like this in London—Fanshawe to enjoy.

#### TRANSCARE COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to rise today to speak about TransCare Community Support Services, a registered charitable organization providing quality care and compassionate services in Scarborough.

For 30 years, TransCare Community Support Services has been a leader in helping seniors and adults with disabilities. They provide a range of services that often make a difference as to whether someone can continue to live in their home instead of a long-term-care facility.

Recently, TransCare received funding from the Healthy Work Environments Partnership and Innovation Fund. Through this fund, TransCare developed a new DVD for caregivers that demonstrates exercises and their benefits for individuals with dementia. The DVD is available in both English and French.

Last Friday, I had the pleasure of attending the TransCare annual volunteer and staff appreciation celebration. At this celebration, I had an opportunity to thank the many volunteers and staff for their hard work and dedication providing quality care in Scarborough. The evening celebration also included recognition of their executive director, Odette Maharaj, who has worked for TransCare for 30 years. I want to congratulate Odette for her dedication as well as her leadership.

I want to thank and congratulate the TransCare board of directors, under the leadership of president Royston Heywood, Odette Maharaj and her entire team for delivering quality, effective and affordable care for all of Scarborough.

#### ROB AND LINDA BEYER

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I wanted to speak about one of those briefings that one doesn't readily forget. This one took place in September 2010 at the Canadian consulate in Nairobi, Kenya. What they told us there was, "Don't trust anyone. Don't trust the taxis. Don't trust the banks. Don't trust the hotel. Don't trust the police. Don't take public transit, and if you have to take public transit, take only JimCab. Upon entering the vehicle, immediately roll up your windows and lock all your doors. Tell the concierge where you're going, how long you'll be and the route you're taking."

Who would want to live in a country like that? Who would want to live in a country where the houses are all surrounded with 10-foot concrete walls, with broken glass cemented on the top and electric or barbed wire

fence above that? Well, I'll tell you who would want to live there. Canadians, Ontarians, Ontarians who want to make a difference, Ontarians like Rob and Linda Beyer.

Rob Beyer, the headmaster at the International Christian College in Nairobi, Kenya, is also the Canadian evacuation warden for district 9. Think of that. I contacted Rob Beyer after I heard what happened in the Westgate mall. Rob informed me that he was at the hospital, that one of his students had been shot and her father had been killed.

Linda Beyer works with the UN, convincing mothers to breastfeed in Langata and Kibera. Kibera is the largest slum in the world, where 1.2 million people live in absolute poverty. In Langata, where I worked, there are no adults over the age of 40; they're all dead from disease. She's trying to convince the mothers to breastfeed because there's no clean water to wash their sippy cups and baby bottles, and so the kids are dying from the bacteria that's in there.

Canadians are reaching out around the world to make a difference, Ontarians are trying to show the world what happens in our great province. To all those Canadians and to all those Ontarians, we thank them for taking the time and making a difference around the world.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their comments.

#### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

##### CULTURE DAYS

**Hon. Michael Chan:** On behalf of the Ontario government, I'm pleased to invite Ontarians to participate in an important initiative taking place this weekend. Culture Days is a grassroots movement that invites the public to create, participate and celebrate culture in communities in every province and territory in Canada.

Here in Ontario, more than 1,000 Culture Days activities are taking place in over 150 communities. This hands-on, interactive event demonstrates the infinite possibilities for Ontarians from all walks of life to connect with culture in all its forms—bringing the creator and the public closer together to build understanding and appreciation for the arts.

Now in its fourth year, the Culture Days movement continues to gain momentum and boosts recognition that the culture sector has a direct impact on the health and stability of our society.

Mr. Speaker, our government is proud to support Culture Days because we recognize that an investment in our culture sector is an investment in our future. Our government understands that the potential and strength of our culture sector lies with our artists and content creators—people whose work breathes life into our communities and whose imaginative expression drives innovation and helps to grow our economy.



Ontario's culture sector generates about \$23 billion annually in our economy and supports over 250,000 jobs.

The success of the world's economies is increasingly measured by their level of creativity, and Ontario can proudly boast one of the best culture sectors in the world. We are fortunate to have people who care deeply about the value of creativity and who are eager to share their talents and passion with the people of this great province.

This weekend, Speaker, as artists share their talents with us, it is our time to give back. This weekend, our government is marking Culture Days by proclaiming September 28 and 29 as the province's Celebrate the Artist weekend. To broaden the reach and scope of Celebrate the Artist weekend, we have aligned with the nationwide Culture Days movement. Now is the time for each of us to recognize Ontario's artists and content creators for the invaluable contributions they make to our communities, our economy and our everyday lives. As individuals, we play a leading role to celebrate our artists.

I would like to recognize the Ontario Arts Council's efforts to support Culture Days.

I invite everyone to visit [on.culturedays.ca](http://on.culturedays.ca) for more information on where and how to get involved with Culture Days.

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I'd also like to highlight that nominations are now being accepted for the 2014 Premier's Awards for Excellence in the Arts. Anyone in Ontario can nominate an Ontario artist or organization. Today, there are almost 57,000 professional artists in Ontario who entertain, enlighten, educate and inspire. This weekend, as the people of Ontario participate in Culture Days, I encourage everyone to think about an artist who inspires you. And don't delay; nominations for the Premier's Awards close December 2.

The faces of our culture sector belong to inspirational artists, producers, innovators, creators and performers, whose work enriches our lives. They deserve our attention, our applause and our gratitude. We need to support and celebrate our strengths—our artists—so that we can unlock and bring forward our full potential.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It's time for responses.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** On behalf of our leader, Tim Hudak, and the entire PC caucus, I rise today to respond to the minister's statement on Culture Days in Ontario.

Culture Days takes place this year from September 27 to 29 throughout the province of Ontario. During that time, thousands of free activities are offered across Ontario for everyone of all ages. Culture Days promotes inclusivity, awareness, participation and engagement in arts and culture for all Canadians. Artists participate and give their time freely during Culture Days to promote a wider understanding of their work and the diversity of our society.

Culture Days features individual artists, diverse cultural groups, organizations, municipalities and festivals that come together to inspire greater participation in the arts and culture. This is seen through free, hands-on inter-

active activities that invite the public to the behind-the-scenes world of artists, creators and heritage workers.

Culture Days creates bridges between communities, highlighting the notion that arts and culture are for everyone, regardless of age, geography, background or income.

As a leading voice for the active and engaged cultural life of all Ontarians, Culture Days provides tools and resources to a wide variety of artists and cultural organizations to help them unite our communities through engagement in culture.

In Ontario, more than 1,000 activities are being presented in over 150 cities and towns across the province by approximately 700 different artistic, cultural and community organizations. Ontario Culture Days is organized and supported by a volunteer task force of over 80 volunteers across the province. These volunteers are from local arts councils, municipalities, libraries, museums and major arts institutions.

In my riding of Halton, Culture Days plays a significant role across the entire region. In Halton region alone, over 100 free activities are scheduled to take place, making it the second most active area in the province after Toronto. A variety of different sites across Halton will feature cultural and artistic offerings, including the Queen Elizabeth Park community, where the cultural centre in Oakville has events planned in collaboration with the town of Oakville and the Oakville Arts Council.

In Milton, the Milton Centre for the Arts hosts a number of activities in partnership with the town of Milton, the Milton Public Library and the staff and volunteers of Arts Milton. I encourage everyone to join local Milton artist Aparna Rangnekar in the painting of a large-scale community mural that will grow to represent how we cultivate culture in our community. The Arts Milton community mural project will take place on Saturday, September 28 and Sunday, September 29, on Main Street in downtown Milton.

Saturday morning, September 28, you can also enjoy one of the most active farmers' markets in Ontario on Main Street in downtown Milton.

If painting isn't your specialty, come and be a puppeteer at the Milton Public Library. Try your hand at making puppets and putting on your own puppet show while being inspired by different shows from library staff and the teen advisory group in Milton.

As you can see, Mr. Speaker, these are but a few examples of what to expect from Ontario Culture Days this year.

Again, I encourage all members of this House to take some time and become involved with the Ontario Culture Days activity in your own riding, while helping to celebrate Ontario's rich culture and artistic heritage.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** As the NDP critic for tourism, culture and sport, I have learned about many new cultural activities, not only in my own riding, but around our province.

The [culturedays.ca](http://culturedays.ca) website states: "The fourth annual Culture Days campaign is under way. This grassroots

Canada-wide movement aims to raise awareness, participation and engagement in the arts and cultural life of our communities.”

I want to quote another from the website fact sheet that will bring quickly into focus how important and significant Culture Days has become:

“An estimated 600,000 artists and cultural organizations voluntarily welcomed 1.6 million Canadians to their 7,000 registered Culture Days activities in 850 cities and towns across the country during the 2012 event.

“Culture Days represents the largest-ever collective public participation campaign undertaken by the arts and cultural community in Canada.”

That’s very, very impressive, Speaker.

This weekend will be overflowing with cultural and arts activities right across our country. In fact, on the Culture Days website, it states that there will be 1,520 Culture Days activities across our province alone—quite an extraordinary number that will not only attract local participants but will attract many visitors and tourists.

In southern Ontario, there are four featured activities on the website, all of which look interesting and very exciting, Speaker. The Museum of Inuit Art is holding an event called Identifying Inuit Art, which will have an Inuit art specialist examine participants’ objects and identify them as genuine Inuit art and perhaps correct art that has been misattributed.

On Friday in Guelph, there’s the Guelphonography Mobile Photography Contest. This event not only shows the work of mobile phone photographers, but it taps into the new way that people take pictures with their mobile phones rather than traditional cameras.

Also on Friday in Windsor, there’s Scattered Ecstasies, an interplay among poetry, art and drama. It’s an interesting concept, Speaker, where a poet will read their poetry while sketchers will create a visual depiction of their poem.

In Aurora on Saturday, there will be a Human Library, where the books you sign out are real people with real stories to share. What a tremendous idea. At this event, you can ask questions of the creative authors, musicians and journalists, while enjoying an opening performance by slam poet Sterling Dillinger. You might even learn about what a slam poet is.

I wanted to highlight these four events, Speaker, from the Culture Days website because they show the tremendous diversity and the cultural activities that go on in our province.

In my own hometown, in Hamilton, there are activities ranging from historical and art walks and tours through to the improv boot camp workshop to an all-ages art workshop.

I suggest you go to the Culture Days website and click on “Find Activities,” then choose a search for your liking or your interest. I’m sure that you’ll be amazed at the number and variety of events, activities and communities where Culture Days is held.

The real bonus, Speaker, for so many Ontarians is that Culture Days activities are free. So even if things are

financially tight, you can take your family to enjoy one of these activities for gratis.

The thing about Culture Days that makes it an even more attractive set of events is that it’s a grassroots organization; it doesn’t seem to rely on large government or large corporations, but on those in the cultural community.

When I first thought about Culture Days, what came to mind was Doors Open in May each year. Doors Open focuses on our built and natural history, opening buildings and sites that would otherwise not be accessible to the general public, and it is a wonderful beginning to the summer season.

Culture Days, likewise, opens our minds to activities that we might otherwise not have even considered. It likely even informs us about activities we would not even have thought existed, and it brings our summer to an interesting learning end.

I congratulate and thank all those who put their time and effort and energy into Culture Days and are making it yet another Canadian national treasure.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their comments.

## PETITIONS

### WATER QUALITY

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Durham.

**Mr. John O’Toole:** Mr. Speaker, I’m about to get my petitions out here. I always have them. Thank you very much for this opportunity to represent the people of Durham.

The petition reads as follows:

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“Whereas, under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario regulation 319/08, public health inspectors are required to undertake risk assessments of small drinking water systems”—these are like wells;

“Whereas many of these small drinking water systems are located in homes operating bed and breakfasts in rural Ontario;

“Whereas private homes that are the sites of bed and breakfasts already have potable drinking water used by the homeowners and their families every day;

“Whereas many of these bed and breakfasts have established the quality of their drinking water through years of regular testing;

“Whereas these home-based businesses are facing high costs to comply with the new requirements of regulation 319/08;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Minister of Health amend Ontario regulation 319/08 to give the testing track record of a small drinking water system greater weight in the risk assessment pro-



cess. Furthermore we, the undersigned, ask that bed and breakfasts operated within a private home with a drinking water supply meeting all the requirements of a private home not be subject to regulation 319/08. Furthermore we ask the minister to work with the bed and breakfast industry to find simplified, safe solutions for smaller operations (three or four guests.)”

I’m pleased to sign and support it and present it to Jasper, one of my favourite pages here.

### TAXATION

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I have a very important petition here.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the cost of living in northwestern Ontario is significantly higher than other regions of the province due to the high cost of necessities such as hydro, home heating fuel, gasoline and auto insurance; and

“Whereas an increase in the price of any of these essential goods will make it even more difficult for people living in northwestern Ontario to pay their bills and put food on the table;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To reject any proposed increase to the harmonized sales tax, gas tax or any other fees or taxes in the north-west; and instead investigate other means such as increasing corporate tax compliance or eliminating corporate tax loopholes in order to fund transit in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area.”

I support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Katherine to deliver it to the table.

### PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I have a petition here relating to the callous cuts that the government is implementing in physiotherapy.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ministry of Health is planning on eliminating OHIP-funded physiotherapy services that are being provided to seniors in a retirement home as of August 1, 2013. This service has been proven to help seniors improve mobility and decrease risks of falls. One out of two seniors over the age of 80 years fall each year. The residents who live at Supples Landing, a retirement home in Pembroke, average 88 years of age;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Ask that the Ministry of Health consider allowing the physiotherapist to continue to provide their services in the retirement homes with the same payment structure. We ask that you extend the deadline until other arrangements can be made. At this time we are not aware of where in the community the group sessions will be held. If we do bring in physiotherapists to lead exercise classes and one-on-one, who will absorb the cost?”

I affix my name to this petition and send it down with Peyton.

### MINING INDUSTRY

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s mineral wealth belongs to the people of Ontario;

“Whereas the people who collectively own these natural resources should stand to enjoy their benefits;

“Whereas Ontario’s Mining Act presently calls for resources mined in Ontario to be processed in Canada, yet allows cabinet to grant exceptions to the clause;

“Whereas these exceptions ensure residents of Ontario are told why our resources are being shipped elsewhere—information that can be used to better plan for infrastructure and job training needs to ensure a more competitive environment;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To amend the Mining Act to ensure that people living in Ontario maximize the benefit of their natural resources.”

I support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Aly to deliver to the table.

### RURAL SCHOOLS

**Mr. John O’Toole:** I’m pleased to present my second petition, and it reads as follows. This is from the riding of Durham, of course.

“Whereas Cartwright High School is an important part of the Blackstock and area community; and

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty promised in the 2007 election that he would keep rural schools open when he declared that, ‘Rural schools help to keep communities strong’; and”—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O’Toole:** The Minister of the Environment should stop interrupting, because I’m representing my community.

“Whereas schools in rural areas are community places; and

“Whereas Cartwright students, families, friends and staff have created an effective learning experience that emphasizes a community atmosphere, individual attention and full participation by students in school activities; and

“Whereas the framework of rural schools is different from urban schools and therefore deserves to be governed by a rural school policy; and

“Whereas the McGuinty government found \$12 million to keep school swimming pools open in Toronto but hasn’t found” one dime “to keep rural schools open in communities such as Blackstock;”—shameful.

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:”

That the Dalton McGuinty government—request that they support the Cartwright High School community and suspend plans to close Cartwright High School.

I'm pleased to sign and support this.

### HYDRO RATES

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas home heating and electricity are essential utilities for northern families;

“Whereas the government has a duty and an obligation to ensure that essential goods and services are affordable for all families living in the north and across the province;

“Whereas government policy such as the Green Energy Act, the harmonized sales tax, cancellation of gas plants in Oakville and Mississauga have caused the price of electricity to artificially increase to the point it is no longer affordable for families or small business;

“Whereas electricity generated and used in northwestern Ontario is among the cleanest and cheapest to produce in Canada, yet has been inflated by government policy;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To take immediate steps to reduce the price of electricity in the northwest and ensure that residents and businesses have access to energy that properly reflects the price of local generation.”

I support this immensely, and will sign my name and give it to Gabrielle to deliver to the table.

### TIRE DISPOSAL

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I have petitions here from the folks in my riding.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario government has approved massive increases to Ontario Tire Stewardship's eco fees for agricultural tires, increasing some fees from \$15.29 to \$352.80, \$546.84 or \$1,311.24;

“Whereas Ontario imposes tire eco fees that are dramatically higher than those in other provinces;

“Whereas other provincial governments either exempt agricultural tires from recycling programs or charge fees only up to \$75;

“Whereas these new fees will result in increased costs for our farmers and lost sales for our farm equipment dealerships;

“Whereas the PC caucus has proposed a new plan that holds manufacturers and importers of tires responsible for recycling, but gives them the freedom to work with other businesses to find the best way possible to carry out that responsibility;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Please suspend the decision to significantly increase Ontario Tire Stewardship's fees on agricultural and off-

the-road tires pending a thorough impact study and implementation of proposals to lower costs.”

I sign this petition and send it down with James.

### COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I have another petition, which reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre is recognized as one of the leading primary care providers in northwestern Ontario, providing essential services to those living in not only Ignace, but across northwestern Ontario; and

“Whereas a 2010 rent increase by the government of Ontario has threatened the long-term viability of the health centre's operations; and

“Whereas the rent being charged to the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre is much higher than rent being charged to similar operations in other communities and far surpasses ‘market rent’ for a small community in northwestern Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To immediately rectify the situation and ensure the long-term viability of the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre by either reducing rent, transferring ownership of the building to the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre, or through capital funds to build a new facility that better suits the community's needs.”

I support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Taylor to deliver.

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### ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I have a petition regarding the boondoggle that is the College of Trades.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government of Ontario's newly created Ontario College of Trades is planning to hit hard-working tradespeople with membership fees that, if the college has its way, will add up to \$84 million a year; and

“Whereas the Ontario College of Trades has no clear benefit and no accountability as tradespeople already pay for licences and countless other fees to government; and

“Whereas Ontario has struggled for years to attract people to skilled trades and the planned tax grab will kill jobs, and drive people out of trades;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To stop the job-killing trades tax and shut down the Ontario College of Trades immediately.”

I affix my name to this petition and send it down with William.



## HYDRO RATES

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** Another important petition here.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas home heating and electricity are essential utilities for northern families;

"Whereas the government has a duty and an obligation to ensure that essential goods and services are affordable for all families living in the north and across the province;

"Whereas government policy such as the Green Energy Act, the harmonized sales tax, cancellation of gas plants in Oakville and Mississauga have caused the price of electricity to artificially increase to the point it is no longer affordable for families or small business;

"Whereas electricity generated and used in northwestern Ontario is among the cleanest and cheapest to produce in Canada, yet has been inflated by government policy;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To take immediate steps to reduce the price of electricity in the northwest and ensure that residents and businesses have access to energy that properly reflects the price of local generation."

## CHILD PROTECTION

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas Ontario is one of the few provinces that does not have independent oversight of child welfare administration; and

"Whereas eight provinces now have independent oversight of child welfare issues, including child protection; and

"Whereas all provincial ombudsmen first identified child protection as a priority issue in 1986, and still Ontario does not allow the Ombudsman to investigate people's complaints about children's aid societies' (CAS) decisions; and

"Whereas people wronged by CAS decisions concerning placement, access, custody or care are not allowed to appeal those decisions to the Ontario Ombudsman's office;"

"Therefore, be it resolved that we support the Ombudsman having the power to probe decisions and investigate complaints concerning the province's children's aid societies (CAS)."

I affix my name to the petition and send it down with James.

## TAXATION

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I have such an important petition that I want to read it again to make sure that everybody is listening to it.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the cost of living in northwestern Ontario is significantly higher than other regions of the province due to the high cost of necessities such as hydro, home heating fuel, gasoline and auto insurance; and

"Whereas an increase in the price of any of these essential goods will make it even more difficult for people living in northwestern Ontario to pay their bills and put food on the table;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To reject any proposed increase to the harmonized sales tax, gas tax or any other fees or taxes in the northwest; and instead investigate other means such as increasing corporate tax compliance or eliminating corporate tax loopholes in order to fund transit in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area."

I support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Ian to deliver to the table.

## COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre is recognized as one of the leading primary care providers in northwestern Ontario, providing essential services to those living in not only Ignace, but across northwestern Ontario; and

"Whereas a 2010 rent increase by the government of Ontario has threatened the long-term viability of the health centre's operations; and

"Whereas the rent being charged to the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre is much higher than rent being charged to similar operations in other communities and far surpasses 'market rent' for a small community in northwestern Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately rectify the situation and ensure the long-term viability of the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre by either reducing rent, transferring ownership of the building to the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre, or through capital funds to build a new facility that better suits the community's needs."

I support this petition, will affix my signature and give it to page Pratah to deliver to the table.

**PRIVATE MEMBERS'  
PUBLIC BUSINESS**

**INTER-PROVINCIAL IMPORTATION  
OF WINE, BEER AND SPIRITS ACT, 2013**

**LOI DE 2013 SUR L'IMPORTATION  
INTERPROVINCIALE DE VIN, DE BIÈRE  
ET DE SPIRITUEUX**

Mr. Milligan moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 98, An Act respecting the importation of wine, beer and spirits from other provinces / Projet de loi 98, Loi concernant l'importation de vin, de bière et de spiritueux provenant d'autres provinces.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** It's always a privilege to rise in the House, as it is today for the second reading of my bill, which will amend the Liquor Control Act. This bill will remove the unnecessary interprovincial trade barrier that undermines our economy by stifling investment and inhibiting job creation. The implementation of this bill will allow Ontario's wineries to grow their sales domestically through interprovincial trade opportunities. Furthermore, it will grant Ontario consumers the same market access to wine as residents of other wine-producing provinces already enjoy.

The wine industry is of immense importance to the province of Ontario. It is a huge employer, giving over 14,000 Ontarians jobs and having an economic impact of nearly \$3.34 billion for the province. This amount is generated from a contribution of \$2.3 billion worth of business revenue from the Ontario wine and grape industry, tax revenues of \$444 million and wages of upwards of \$593 million.

If we take leadership in promoting the abolishment of this interprovincial trade barrier, the benefits to our wine industry here in Ontario can be enormous. Wine growers in our province all unanimously agree that there is a huge appetite for Ontario wine in Quebec. Many wineries in the province are giving multiple tours in French every day to accommodate their guests from Quebec.

Once taking the right step and allowing our residents to purchase wines from other provinces, we must encourage the remaining provinces to do the same, Mr. Speaker.

When you give it some thought, you quickly realize how unreasonable and outdated laws prohibiting interprovincial wine sales are. A winery in Ontario can ship wine to anywhere within the province, but as soon as you hit the provincial border it becomes illegal. Nevertheless, that same winery is free to ship wine to most countries internationally.

The other day, I held a round-table meeting with stakeholders, and they were telling me how they can freely sell and ship a few bottles of wine to someone living in Hong Kong or just about anywhere else in the

world. Meanwhile, it would be illegal for them to ship wine to a visitor from Montreal.

The interprovincial wine trade barriers currently in place have a significant restraint on the growing of the wine industry. They result in less than a third of wine consumed in Canada coming from domestically produced wines. The federal government has instituted changes through Bill C-311 to rectify this situation. Now it's up to the individual provinces that must take action and change their own liquor regulations in order to conform with the federal changes.

We must take the same steps that other provinces have already taken in opening their borders and demonstrating leadership in the process, as we have, by far, the largest wine-producing industry of any province in the country.

We should be confident in the wine industry we have here in Ontario. Our wine producers certainly are confident in their products, and feel that they can compete with the best wine products available internationally and here in Canada.

**1350**

The consumption of wine is rapidly increasing in the province. Just last year, Ontarians consumed an estimated 84 million bottles of Ontario wine; I might have had one or two myself. That's over 420 million glasses of only Ontario wine. According to an economic impact study, every single bottle of wine produced in Ontario creates spinoff benefits worth \$40.

In addition to this, the beautiful wineries we have here bring nearly two million tourists into Ontario each and every year. That number of visitors is almost three times the number of people that visited the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. These two million visitors generate an economic impact of \$644 million in tourism-related fields, according to the wine growers' association of Ontario.

The Ontario wine regions have developed a large and loyal following. Many visitors to these regions end up returning again and again after the experience that they have had at our great wineries. Moreover, as opposed to most tourist attractions, tourism in the wine region is not limited to the warm summer months. The icewine festival is a huge hit every winter, bringing people into the Niagara region from all over the country and abroad for a taste of delicious local cheeses and icewines.

We can help make festivals like this an even greater success. If interprovincial wine trade barriers are abolished, we will be able to bring even larger numbers of people into the region to taste the wines and have a few cases of wine shipped back home.

In Paris, wine shows are attended by people from across France. They come to Paris to try different types of wines, and they then order the wines that they fancy and have them delivered back home. How great would it be if we provided Ontarians the same luxury, where they could go to a wine show anywhere in Canada and then order a few bottles of wine, to have them shipped home?

The second-largest producer of wine in Canada, after Ontario, is the province of British Columbia. They are



producing great wines in the Okanagan region, and there is no reason why we should restrict Ontario consumers from purchasing these wines. We know that Ontarians love wine, and we should make this legislative change to allow them to import the wines they want.

After British Columbia eliminated their out-of-province wine prohibition, their provincial wine sales actually increased. In order to serve the wineries of Ontario, we should allow them the same opportunity to grow their brands and maximize their sales.

The grape growers and vineyard owners of Ontario make up a significant portion of the agricultural and horticultural sector in the province. Currently, we have approximately 478 grape growers operating on over 15,000 of planted vineyards and four primary viticultural areas: the Niagara Peninsula, Lake Erie North Shore, Pelee Island and, of course, Prince Edward County, next to my great riding of Northumberland—Quinte West.

Every year, these vineyards are increasing their grape production to keep up with demand. Just last year, for wine alone, 65,000 tonnes of grapes were processed. To allow the grape growers across the province to continue expanding their business, we must allow wineries to expand their sales beyond our provincial borders.

As elected officials, our job as public servants is to listen to our constituents. Surveys show that 83% of Ontarians believe that they should be able to order wine online. We must listen to what the citizens of this province want, and allow them to order a bottle of wine from another province and have it shipped to their doorstep.

Our Ontario wineries offer a distinct wine to the market. There is a huge demand for the product they have to offer. In the past, the LCBO has indicated that it is open to the idea of getting rid of interprovincial trade barriers, and other provinces are willing to do the same. As I have mentioned, British Columbia, Nova Scotia and Manitoba have already done so. Now it is our turn.

Premier Wynne met with other Premiers in Ontario's wine region during the annual Council of the Federation gathering. There was a lot of talk about freeing up the wine market in Canada and taking down provincial trade barriers. In fact, the Premier is quoted in the *Toronto Star* as saying, "Premier Clark and I had a good conversation. What we talked about was how we can continue to work together to grow the Canadian wine industry and to expand our markets." Well, Premier, it's now time to turn those words into action and pass Bill 98. This bill is firmly supported by wine growers in the province and most Ontarians. I hope that all parties will support this bill today as well.

I would also like to thank our federal cousins, who actually unanimously voted in favour of Bill C-311, which was brought forward by MP Dan Albas. Thank you very much to our federal cousins for taking the lead on this. We're just bringing our Bill 98 online into the 21st century, controlling this.

I want to thank all members for their time, and hope to see this bill pass into committee as soon as possible to

provide our grape growers and winemakers some good news during their busy harvest season.

I also want to thank Shirley-Ann George of Free My Grapes, who is here this afternoon. Shirley has been instrumental in realizing the potential of what we have as a jewel in the fine wineries and grape-growing producers here in the province of Ontario.

I would hope that all parties realize how important this bill is for our province and the economy, and I encourage each and every one of you to come down to Prince Edward-Hastings, go to the north shore of Lake Erie and out to the Niagara Peninsula. Of course, the fine member from Prince Edward-Hastings who will be speaking to the bill a little later on, has some of the finest wines in the province, right next door to me—and has a huge impact on our riding.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the time given here today.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I thank the member from Northumberland—Quinte West for bringing this forward. I think we all agree that there are all kinds of antiquated inter-provincial barriers to trade that are sometimes more severe than barriers between countries. So a lot of these long-standing trade barriers between our provinces need re-examination.

In the beer industry, I know that for many years you couldn't sell Ontario beer in the Maritimes; it had to be produced in the Maritimes. I'm just wondering whether that's still in place. Quebec beer, too, had to be brewed in Quebec; therefore, you had to have a plant there and you couldn't ship beer across provincial boundaries. I'm not sure if that's still there, but I know it was. I think this kind of blockage is not good, considering we're a country with open borders.

I just can't quite understand, and maybe the member or other members can explain to me—we are trying to promote the consumption, the sale, the growth of Ontario grapes and wines. Our job is to make sure we do whatever we can as MPPs and government to make sure people are aware of the incredible fine quality of Niagara grapes, Niagara wines.

I know they've got over 40 wineries in Prince Edward County. They're just starting out and blossoming. I think Niagara had over 140 wineries at last count.

Those of us—can remember how people used to sort of scoff at Ontario wines and say, "Well, you've got to drink French wine or American wine or Italian wine."

It has really been an Ontario success story. The fact is, our Ontario wineries are now as good as any in the world, and that has taken a lot of entrepreneurship; you know, Pillitteri and all those great people in the Niagara region who worked from nothing when the Niagara region was famous for growing Concord grapes, I think. You can see, with their hybrid version of different grapes, they've done an amazing job, and the partner in that has been the Ontario government. It has not just been our government; it's the legacy of many Ontario govern-

ments, who brought in the VQA system, that in many ways used the LCBO as a conduit to grow an industry.

**1400**

It wouldn't have been possible without the LCBO. You know what would have happened? People would have always gone and bought the cheap American wine or the cheap Hungarian wine. I remember there used to be a Hungarian wine called Szekszárdi Vörös. I think it was going for \$2.75 a bottle when I was going to university. Anyway, that's what people were drinking. They were drinking Four Aces and all these other awful, awful wines.

The Ontario wine industry really deserves a lot of credit. They overcame incredible international competition—but it came with the partnership of the Ontario government and the LCBO. If you go to any LCBO store in Ontario, they feature Ontario wines, local wines and VQA wines prominently, to everyone's advantage. That has been an incredible success story.

I just don't know how this really helps. I'm not going to say that I'm going to vote against it, but I just want that explained to me: how buying BC wine is going to help basically grow the Ontario wine industry—and nothing against BC wine, the Okanagan Valley; we know it's great quality. But I just hope that we can make sure that we spend a lot more time promoting Ontario-grown wine, Ontario-made wine. They still need help, because they have very stiff competition from all the dumping of wine that happens from Australia, the wine that's dumped—

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Chile.

**Mr. Mike Colle:**—from Chile, from Argentina.

It always baffles me how they can ship a bottle of wine from Chile that's three-year-old, four-year-old Chilean wine—shiraz, or whatever it is—and they ship it all the way to Ontario. They bottle it and so on and so forth, and they can undercut, undersell an Ontario-made wine. I don't know if they pay anybody in Chile to make wine, and why Chilean wine or Argentinian wine can cost \$8 a bottle. It just boggles the mind.

We have to know that the Ontario wineries, the Ontario grape growers, the Ontario wine industry are still battling the international forces. They're not just battling BC. They're not really in competition with BC or some other provinces that are into wines.

We have to be cognizant of the fact that the LCBO is always there to try and do its best. It's not perfect. We know that the LCBO is undergoing some changes now that I think are very interesting. I asked the Minister of Finance the other day about the new boutique wine stores, Our Wine Country.

I hope that they continue to allow some breakthroughs where we can buy Ontario wines at the local farmers' markets. That's one area that, hopefully, we'll investigate so that we have more availability.

I know we've got some kiosks in some grocery stores where you can buy Ontario wines, but it's very hit-and-miss. You can only buy from that one company—Inniskillin, or whatever it is, which, by the way, was one

of the pioneer wine-making companies. Inniskillin was an incredible success story.

Château des Charmes, I remember—my colleague here from Brampton, which has a lot of people who know a lot about wine, will know that we have some of the finest wines in the world called icewines that are being copied. The Japanese and the Chinese are now claiming they have icewine, which isn't icewine. It's basically wine with sugar in it, and they put an icewine label on it.

In fact, I have a friend who used to be a barber. Mr. Speaker, you probably knew him. He used to be a barber on Annette and Runnymede—Joe DeMaria. He bought 15 acres in Beamsville, and he decided he was going to put that 15 acres into cultivation for icewine. Everybody said, "You're a barber. What do you know about wine? You're a barber from Toronto. What do you know about wine?"

Anyway, Joe DeMaria and his wife, Charlene, took their life's savings and took out a second mortgage on their barbershop to produce an icewine that has won international competitions all over the world.

In fact, he tells me that he took one bottle of his wine—Joe DeMaria, the barber—by plane to New York to sell to someone for \$22,000. Despite the fact that he was battling the big winemakers—he was battling the LCBO to get shelf space—Joe DeMaria is an example of the incredible entrepreneurship, the creativity, the excellence of Canadian winemakers and Ontario winemakers.

So, sure, let's bring in BC wine, but all I say is, let's protect an incredible, successful industry that is second to none in the world: the Ontario wine industry. Ontario wines are second to none, Mr. Speaker, and I hope that tonight, when you go home—don't take out that cheap Italian wine. Buy a good bottle of Ontario wine.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** I'd like to thank, for all the hard work, our member from Northumberland—Quite West.

I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 98, the Inter-Provincial Importation of Wine, Beer and Spirits Act. Bill 98 proposes to eliminate Ontario's regulations preventing the interprovincial sale of wine, and potentially beer and spirits, for non-commercial consumers. It arrives none too soon. Canada's dusty-sounding Importation of Intoxicating Liquors Act is an artifact of the Prohibition era. Not just that, but our liquor regulatory system is arguably out of step with the wider world.

The North American Free Trade Agreement has been in effect for almost 10 years. We travel around the world, lowering barriers to trade and opening new markets—recall that the former Premier undertook four missions to China and two to India—yet Ontario adults are unable to freely purchase wine, beer and spirits from other jurisdictions within their own country.

Last year, the federal government amended the Importation of Intoxicating Liquors Act, which governs the interprovincial sale of wine products between provinces, lifting a long-standing barrier. Bill C-311 made it legal



under federal law to take wine between provinces. But C-311 defers to the provinces themselves. Its powers are limited by the law in the province to which the wine is being imported. Every province must therefore amend its own legislation to legalize interprovincial trade, and that's what Bill 98 proposes to do.

The bill eliminates the ability of the LCBO to bar the importation of wine from other provinces and is part of a cross-Canada effort to encourage all provinces to make similar changes. Bill 98 also makes provisions for the same process if and when the federal government moves to eliminate its legislative barriers to the interprovincial sale of beer and spirits.

Bill 98 is part of the Ontario PC Party's commitment to cutting the red tape that is stifling investment, thereby creating jobs and boosting tax revenue for the province. It also expands customer choice, which we can all agree is a positive step.

The Premier herself has admitted that this province has some of Canada's most restrictive and outdated laws around the sale of alcohol. The Minister of Economic Development has been talking up Ontario's fantastic craft brewery sector, a sector that includes small businesses like Burlington's Nickel Brook brewery.

I would hope that we will be able to come together and support Bill 98, a positive step that will increase the visibility and prosperity of this province's wineries, breweries and distillers, and the satellite businesses that support them. Lowering importation restrictions is part of creating the right climate to create jobs and grow the economy. Wineries across this province have said that eliminating interprovincial trade barriers will have a positive impact on their sales.

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Finally, there is speculation that the federal government is about to adopt measures similar to C-311 for beer and spirits. Bill 98 makes a provision for the same process if the federal government eliminates their legislative barriers to the interprovincial sale of beer and spirits.

Changes such as these should help free up the Canadian market for domestic wines, beers and spirits; drive job growth; increase tax revenue; and expand consumers' choice. Cheers to that.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I want to state at the outset that I rise in support of this bill. I don't think there should be any question of the members in this House—although I know there are some concerns that we need to support this bill because we need to be proud Ontarians.

Not only do we need to be proud Ontarians, and proud of the products that we produce here; we also need to be very proud Canadians and to support people from one end of this country to the other. Just as we make good wines and spirits and beers, so are good wines and spirits and beers produced in all parts of the country.

As Canadians, we owe it to ourselves to support our fellow Canadians so that they, too, can have a good lifestyle. I embrace each and every part of this country. I

have travelled to all of it. I am as proud of the people who live in Newfoundland and British Columbia as I am of the people who live here in Ontario.

This is an anomaly that we're talking about here today, an anomaly that goes back generations because we were trying to protect the jobs in Ontario. There was a good reason to protect them in those days. There was a good reason because Ontario was the heartland. Ontario was the only place that wines were produced. By and large, most of the spirits and beer that were produced were centred in Ontario, in the Toronto and London area, as well as some of the beer, of course, being produced around Montreal.

Today we produce world-quality products in this province. Wherever you go, you can find world-class products produced in Ontario, but you have a hard time finding those products on the shelves in other provinces, particularly those that have not signed on to the accord.

I remember a time, not too long ago, when Ontario wine was perhaps not the best. I remember reading, about 40 years ago in a wine magazine, that someone discussed Ontario wine with some disgust because they said that the Ontario wine had a foul gasoline taste. It was, in fact, because of the grapes we were using. Most of it, in those days, was Concord grapes. It had what is called in wine parlance a foxy taste. It wasn't very good.

One of the first pioneers to come in and say, "We can do a better job," was a guy by the name of Don Ziraldo. Don is still alive, and Don still has, I think, a share in some of the wineries in the Niagara area: Château des Charmes, which was mentioned, and Inniskillin. I'm not sure which one he's associated with today.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Inniskillin.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Inniskillin.

He said he could produce better wine, and he went out there and started to show that he could do it. He was from Algeria, of all places, and he tasted the wine in Ontario and said, "We can produce better wine than this," and he went out and proved to the world that they could.

Today, Ontario wine wins international awards, and if anybody pooh-poohs Ontario wine, they certainly don't know what it's all about. In Britain, they had blind tastings of Chardonnay between the best Chardonnays from the Chablis region of France and Ontario wines, and we won them all.

If you go around the world and you have blind tastings of icewine that is made in Germany, which invented the wine process, and Ontario wines, they don't have a chance. If you go and you taste some of our wines and spirits, no matter where you go around the world, where Ontario products are put forward, we compete with the best, and, in fact, we can beat them.

Some of my favourite wineries in Ontario that produce wines of exquisite quality—I don't know whether I should be naming them, but it's a free plug for them. Foreign Affair here in the Niagara region produces wine by the ripasso method, and they produce wines that are exquisite. In fact, the wine that is our red wine here in the Legislature is a Foreign Affair Winery ripasso-method

red. I happen to have thought as well that the white should have been our white wine, but we chose something else. But the method that they use certainly brought it into world-class standards, and it can be purchased anywhere.

I have a cottage that's down on Lake Erie, just south of Windsor. It's a long way to go to a cottage, I know, but my wife likes the area around Amherstburg, and there are many wineries down there. We have some favourites, and the wineries are producing some very good wine that's relatively cheap and that Ontarians should get to know. Some of my favourites are Muscedere and Aleksander; I'm just trying to think of them all. We go over to Pelee Island, to the Pelee Island Winery. Those are the ones we like. We like them so much, and we buy our wines down there.

We also have 31 craft breweries here in the province of Ontario that are producing excellent beer. If you go into the Legislature, you will find that those beers are on sale in our restaurant, that we use them at all of our receptions. They are superb beers, beers that I wish Ontarians knew a great deal more about.

I don't want to leave out our fruit wineries either, because we produce a lot of fruit wine here in the province of Ontario.

We produce spirits of international repute.

In this province, we have hundreds of millions of dollars of sales every year of our wines and spirits and alcohol and beers, and we should be very, very proud of that.

But we are not alone in Canada. We have to think about what is happening out there. Ontarians want to taste other products too; just as we want to taste their products, we know that they want to taste our products. If you have a chance to travel around, because it's hard to find here in Ontario—the wines produced in the Okanagan of BC, especially their Pinot Noirs, I think are starting to become world-class. Certainly the Pinot Noirs of British Columbia can challenge some of the best of Washington state and of Oregon. They can really challenge them—and even of California. They need to be tasted by Ontarians who like and want to taste these.

Nova Scotia is not to be forgotten, because this is something very few people know about at all: Nova Scotia has started to produce amazing sparkling wines. They grow almost exclusively Chardonnay and Riesling grapes, and they make sparkling wines. I don't want to call it champagne, but it is made with the méthode champenoise. When it is blind-tasted against Dom Pérignon and blind-tasted against Veuve Clicquot, we've actually shown that the Nova Scotia wines win. So Canadians in Ontario want to taste those, too, but you can't get them here. You have to go down and fly to Halifax and travel around to find them. Just as I am proud and I want them to taste our icewine, just as I'm proud and want them to taste the wine of our three growing regions in and around the north shore of Lake Erie, in Niagara and in Quinte, I want them, as well, to

taste the wines. I also expect Ontarians will want to taste their wines as well.

It's trying to break the deadlock. It is absolutely time for Ontario to say, "We're going to do it." Already, the two other wine-producing regions of any renown, Nova Scotia and British Columbia, have said, "You can import wine into our province." They've already broken that deadlock. It's us; it's Ontario that hasn't done it. We need to step on-board and we need to do it. Once that happens, people across this country will be able to examine and taste and understand and appreciate the industry that goes on here.

We hire, and we have about 14,000 people who grow grapes and are vintners, and we need to have that leap of faith. We need to have a leap of faith in our grape growers, who grow wonderful grapes, and sometimes have too many. I know that, because every year—I belong to a little group, and we go out and we try to find grapes that can't be sold to the wineries in Ontario, because sometimes there are too many. We buy the juice. I do make my own wine. I make it from Ontario grapes, and I'm very proud of the result of what we get.

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We need to be proud of the vintners who have blended and made and done all of the right things by oaking the wine and making it excellent to the taste.

We need to be proud of the brewers who know how to use the right kind of yeast, who know how to mix the right grains and experiment occasionally with oatmeal and other fruit flavours to impart beers that are unique to Ontario.

We need to be proud of the distillers and what they distill and the kind of liquors that they're able to make here that are unique to Ontario and unique to the world.

We need as well to be proud of the distributors who take all of that and sell it and take it around and let people experiment and take it to the far-flung corners of the province. And I dare say we need to be proud of the LCBO for being part of all of that.

In saying that, why do we stop there? Why do we say we are afraid—or why are those who are afraid to let Ontario compete? Are we protecting an industry that needs to be protected? I don't think anymore that that is the case. Most of the people who I know who are involved in this industry think the time has come for us to spread our wings and the time has come for us to compete. We have shown that we can compete and beat some of the best in the world, where people a generation ago would not have thought that it was possible.

We need to understand that the reason all of this has happened, particularly in grape-growing, is because Ontario scientists have been able to develop strains and vines that are impervious to the cold and don't die off in the frost. There was a time when we had to hill it all up. We don't have to hill it all anymore. There were times when we saw huge vine die-offs every spring because of the cold snaps that hit. That doesn't happen. The development in Canada of Baco Noir grapes and the



development in Canada of Marechal Foch have ensured that our vine survives.

Now we have to look to markets. It's necessary to translate into immediate sales. We should not have the fears. I have heard a fear expressed here today that they're worried because the word "domestic" is not in this bill. Maybe it should be in the bill. At least at first, it should be in the bill. But I'm asking the members, particularly those who have some fears, to support the bill. If the word "domestic" needs to be put into the legislation, surely that can be added in committee. I am asking that we not fear the loss of revenues. I'm asking that we not fear that others won't follow suit, particularly Quebec. The reality is that the law that exists today is a toothless law, because every time I've left this province to BC or to Quebec and brought back wine, there was nobody to stop me at the border from doing it.

I think we need to understand that what is *[inaudible]* here is to look forward with pride and to make sure that Ontario sells its products and that the other parts of Canada are able to sell them to us as well.

Thank you very much to the mover of the bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Mr. Speaker, I have a different view from that which has been expressed. I realize there are different views amongst members, of all the parties probably—different variances.

My greatest concern is the effect on domestic wineries and, at the risk of sounding parochial, to Ontario wineries and the wineries in the Niagara Peninsula. I think the concept of interprovincial trade is very good. The key word that is missing in this is "domestic," because what this invites is foreign wineries to set up in Alberta and then send their product directly into Ontario and sell it without the taxes and without the markups that happen to favour Ontario wines. The same thing happened federally. When they asked the Grape Growers of Ontario, "What is your view of this?"—and I realize they represent the viewpoint of the Grape Growers alone; that's fine. They had the opportunity to do that. They said, "Please place the word 'domestic' in any bill that's brought forward." Because I do see that: people who are going to say, "Hey, we've got a sneaky new way of getting foreign wines into Ontario to compete."

There's a quote from a person—you may disagree with the person; I may disagree or not. But one of the quotes I noticed when this was coming forward federally was one that said, "Why should Ontario residents subsidize BC wineries by ordering direct and avoiding taxes and markup?"—Rowland Dunning, executive director, Canadian Association of Liquor Jurisdictions, in the *Globe and Mail* on July 25, 2013. This followed a July 24, 2013, CBC news clip and article where he is quoted as saying, "[People advocating for changes] just want to lobby to get the products into consumers' hands and avoid those consumers and the wineries paying their fair share of taxes and markups." He indicated that provinces didn't want to lose the tax revenue of approximately

\$300 million annually that they get from selling through liquor stores.

The amount of money that this province derives from the LCBO from the sale of liquor—wine, spirits and beer—is very significant. It pays for hospitals, it pays for roads, it pays for social services, and every time we take away yet another source—and it's always popular; I understand that. It's populist and popular to do it, but it has a profound negative effect.

I suspect that there is sufficient support in the Legislature for this bill, because everybody has talked about it as being something that we want, but I must say that I am very cautious on things that look good and popular, and turn out to be detrimental to our industry in Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I say to the member for St. Catharines: Jim, you've got to be a little more positive about these things. Ontario is a huge producer of wine. We will do well in a competitive situation. We have nothing to fear from a competitive atmosphere when we've got the best wines in Ontario. Our wines will flow out of Ontario much faster than other wines will fly in.

I take your point that adding "domestic" to our wines would be a good safety valve. I don't believe that other wineries would set up in different provinces to bring into Ontario, but if they did, the word "domestic" would be good, and we could add that in committee with no problem.

I would like to give a little history of this, because I've lived through quite a bit of it, and I was involved with some of it. Prior to free trade, in 1989, Canada had an east-west trading pattern. During that time, many provinces set up trade barriers to prevent Ontario or other provinces from dominating their industry, giving their industry a chance to develop. Therefore, over a long period of time, Canada had developed interprovincial trade barriers that prevented the easy flow of products on an east-west basis.

Once free trade took effect in Canada, that east-west basis changed to a north-south axis. Our main trading partner, instead of being the rest of Canada and internationally into Europe—Britain, in particular—changed, and we had much more emphasis on a north-south trading pattern. When that happened, the trade barriers between Canadian provinces became less important.

In fact, trading with other provinces became an opportunity. In many areas of industry, those trade barriers between provinces in Canada disappeared as a natural thing. It didn't need a lot of push; it just happened, because it was opportune for all the people that were involved in it.

In food and food products, it has been much slower to occur. As it has occurred in various areas, it has been of tremendous benefit to all of the provinces combined. There have been a few people who have been adversely affected, certainly, but overall the positive aspects of

interprovincial trade have been a boon to most of the people who have been involved in it.

I think that same thing would occur if we were to drop the trade barriers that we have with domestic wine, in that Ontario is by far the largest producer of wine, and if these trade barriers continue to drop as they have in BC and Alberta and Manitoba, I think we would see tremendous opportunity for Ontario producers.

A lot has been said about the quality of Ontario wine. When we changed from labrusca grapes, which was what you were referring to when you were talking about Concords; there are six or seven varieties—Fredonias, Niagaras, which are the white grapes, Concords. When we dropped those labrusca varieties and learned how to grow viniferas—the viniferas are not an easy variety to grow, but we started learning how to grow those vinifera varieties, the world wine grapes.

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Once we learned how to grow those grapes, and the balance of pushing for production but not pushing too hard because you weaken the vine when it goes into the winter, our quality has become second to none, as has been stated here today, and that would enhance our ability to trade around the world but, more importantly, to trade within Canada, to the benefit of all Ontarians and indeed to the benefit of all Canadians.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure to join the debate on Bill 98, the Inter-Provincial Importation of Wine, Beer and Spirits Act, brought forward by my good friend Mr. Milligan from Northumberland—Quinte West.

As you have heard me say here many times, I come from Prince Edward county, which is a great wine region in Ontario. As I travel around Prince Edward county and speak to the owners of the wineries there, all I hear is, "Free my grapes." I'm happy to represent the fastest-growing wine region in the province, now home to 40 wineries, by the way, and some great names. Some great award-winning wines have come out of this young industry—it's only about 12 years old in Prince Edward county. But it's not just wines; we also have a great craft distillery, 66 Gilead, down there. We have a craft brewer as well, and some great county cider that we promote. All the owners of these industries would love the opportunity to ship their product off to Quebec.

As you are probably aware, in eastern Ontario where we're located, out on Lake Ontario, we get an awful lot of visitors coming from Quebec. They hit the wine tour and travel to the cidery and the brewery as well, and they would love to ship some of the product back home to Quebec. But when the owner says, "We can't ship it back; it's against the law to ship it back," it really doesn't make much sense in 2013, where we are now.

As I meet my vintners and am at events in the county, all they tell me is that they need more access to retail markets. This is a small step that my friend Mr. Milligan is taking by bringing forward this bill, but it is a step that's much-needed for this industry. I have a number of

wineries in my region that tell me they would love to break down our interprovincial trade barriers, and that's exactly what this bill intends to do. Other provinces, like BC and other western provinces, have done this—we've already heard that Nova Scotia has done this as well—because they know we're producing first-class wines and other beverage alcohol sector products as well.

In the county, we have Huff's, Sandbanks, Casa-Dea and Rosehall Run—I'm going to get in trouble for not naming them all. Many of them have won awards, not just in Ontario, not just in North America, but around the world. I can tell you that Casa-Dea's Pinot Grigio and Rosehall's incredible Pinot Noir have become staples on wine lists at the different restaurants we have down in Prince Edward county and also even here in the GTA. You might even find a bottle or two in my office here at Queen's Park. They're usually empty, though.

It can only help our great Ontario wineries to open up access to markets in other provinces. Not every Canadian province has alcohol retail laws that are caught in the Prohibition era like we have here in Ontario. As Alberta and BC have opened up retail opportunities, we've got to make sure we make it easier, not harder, for Ontario producers to access those markets. Our western provinces have already done that.

Some of the best things grow right here in Ontario, but the entire country deserves to enjoy them, not just us here in Ontario. Sometimes even here in Ontario we can't get our hands on products because things are too restricted.

My leader, Mr. Hudak, always tells me that I come from the second-best wine region, in Prince Edward county; he comes from Niagara. But I'm going to have to respectfully disagree with my leader this time and say Prince Edward county is second to none.

Free our grapes. Congratulations, Mr. Milligan. Free our grapes.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. The member for Northumberland—Quinte West, you have two minutes for a response.

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank all members who have spoken to Bill 98 this afternoon. I found the member from Beaches—East York's history and vast knowledge on the subject of wine and grapes particularly interesting. I think perhaps later in the session we'll have to sit down and exchange our insights on the wine industry itself.

I understand there is some resistance from the government side of the Legislature on Bill 98. What I'm hearing is some minor tweaking perhaps needs to be done to the bill. I would encourage the government, if they have any recommendations or minor tweaking they would like to see done to the bill, to get the bill to committee and we can tweak it there. I think this is something that has to go forward. It opens up our economy and gets it going again, and the economic impacts of the wine and grape industry here in the province of Ontario are going to be the true winners, as are the fine connoisseurs of the wines that we produce.



I also heard that we do produce—and I would agree—some of the finest wines this world produces. I would encourage people, having gone to Brock University—I know this weekend is the closing of the grapes and wine festival, so I would encourage any members who are looking to traverse the Niagara region this weekend and enjoy the fall foliage and a nice glass of Ontario wine to please go to the grape and wine festival.

To the member from Prince Edward–Hastings: Thank you very much. Be sure to head down to Sandbanks this summer and do the wine-tasting tour down there.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. We will take the vote at the end of private members' business.

### AGGREGATE RECYCLING PROMOTION ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 SUR LA PROMOTION DU RECYCLAGE DES AGRÉGATS

Ms. Jones moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 56, An Act to prohibit certain restrictions on the use of aggregates in performing public sector construction work / *Projet de loi 56, Loi interdisant certaines restrictions frappant l'utilisation d'agrégats lors de la réalisation de travaux de construction pour le secteur public.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** It's my honour to rise today to debate my private member's bill, Bill 56, the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act. If I may, I'd like to welcome some guests who are here today to watch the debate on Bill 56. In the members' gallery, we have Geoff Wilkinson and Ashley De Souza from the Ontario Road Builders' Association, as well as Brian Messerschmidt from Aggregate Recycling Ontario and Dan Muys from the Ontario Stone, Sand and Gravel Association. Thank you for joining us.

I'm very grateful that all three of these organizations support Bill 56 and that they are not alone. I've also received support for Bill 56 from a variety of important organizations, including the Ready Mixed Concrete Association of Ontario; the Ontario Hot Mix Producers Association; the Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association; Mayor Dave Augustyn from Pelham; and from my riding of Dufferin–Caledon, the support of Carl Cosack and the North Dufferin Agricultural and Community Taskforce. All of these organizations' support is in addition to the many, many comments of support I've received from Dufferin–Caledon and across the province.

On that note, I'd like to share one excerpt from an email of support I received from a constituent: "It is practically a no-brainer to use recycled aggregates. If they pass the test they should be used for any construction application which can use them. As an electrician I

worked on construction for almost 55 years and saw millions of tonnes of concrete poured on hundreds of projects. The applications for recycled aggregate is almost endless and with the improvement of techniques, new or used is a moot argument." I love how he phrases it. This brief point sums up well why recycled aggregates and Bill 56 are so important.

I would be remiss if I did not give special thanks to Mayor Bill Hill of Melancthon in Dufferin county. Mayor Hill's support of Bill 56 has been invaluable, and I appreciate his help.

The reason I introduced Bill 56 is quite simple. I introduced this bill because right now in Ontario there are over three million tonnes of recycled and recyclable aggregates sitting in stockpiles, and more is accumulating every day. But you don't need me to tell you this; you can see it for yourself. Did any of you drive along the 401 by the airport recently? Look north. What you are looking at is what Bill 56 is all about. It's just one example of the massive stockpiles of reclaimed aggregates ready to be recycled and used again that are sitting across our province.

1440

Aggregate resources are the sand, gravel, clay, stone and earth that play a crucial role in just about all of the infrastructure around at any given moment of the day. They form the backbone of things like our roads, subways, homes, offices, schools, bridges and hospitals. With a non-renewable resource as widespread as aggregates, it is important—no, critical—for governments to be aware of the resource and the important factors surrounding its use and development.

As important as aggregates may be, however, that still doesn't answer the question of why aggregate recycling percentages are so low in Ontario. I found this odd, considering how commonplace recycling has become in so many other different settings. For example, it used to be that, once a week, the only thing out in front of our homes to pick up was black garbage bags. Nowadays, it's more rare not to see the famous blue recycling box in front of our homes because recycling has become so common. I think that's why most people I talk to about this bill are surprised to learn that aggregate recycling is not common practice.

Now, over the last number of months, I've received a huge amount of feedback on this bill, and I must say 99% of it has been positive.

You may be asking yourself: What are recycled aggregates? Well, aggregates can generally be divided into primary aggregates, sometimes referred to as virgin aggregates, and secondary aggregates, which are the recycled product.

Aggregates are considered primary when used immediately after extraction. In other words, they're extracted and then they're put to use in our public sector projects.

Recycled aggregates are just that, recycled. These are aggregates that have been reclaimed and are processed to make them eligible to be used again. In short, recycled

aggregates are basically aggregates like concrete and asphalt materials that are reclaimed for various reasons.

Most typically, this sort of reclaiming happens during construction or refurbishment projects. With the proper procedures, these reclaimed aggregates can then be processed into recycled aggregates. It's important because with such large demand for aggregates in Ontario, if more recycled aggregates were used, it would take away some of the pressure to meet the ongoing demand to find primary aggregates, which of course come from our pits and quarries. So increasing recycled aggregate consumption in Ontario is an important goal and one that should be promoted.

I believe that the provincial government should be taking a lead in promoting aggregate recycling, and that is why I have introduced the bill we are debating here this afternoon, the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act.

The reality is that the majority of aggregates are still used in the construction industry, and the largest consumer of aggregates in Ontario by a wide margin is the public sector. I believe we should be taking a leadership role in demonstrating that recycling is important and that used recycling aggregate in construction work makes good business practice.

Currently across Ontario, there are dozens of public sector bodies like the Ministry of Transportation, for example, that are doing a good job of incorporating recycled aggregates into their construction work, but we can do more. Right now, the average recycled aggregate use rate across Ontario is 7%. When you consider that the Ministry of Transportation's average amount of recycled aggregate is approximately 20%, you soon realize that we can do more and we must do more. With the public sector being the largest consumer of aggregates, it only makes sense that if we can increase the usage of recycling aggregate across the public sector, we can have a great impact on the use of recycled product across the province.

The appropriate testing procedures and standards already exist to ensure that recycled aggregates are as safe and as reliable as primary aggregates. As I mentioned, the Ministry of Transportation has used recycled aggregates for years, and actually their percentages every year keep going up, so they're doing a good job and I congratulate them on that.

Other publicly funded institutions should be striving to include recycled aggregate as well. The major problem, though, is that currently many public sector bodies award construction contracts with the stipulation that only 100% primary aggregate will be considered. That, of course, means that when the tenders are open, if you have any mention of using and incorporating recycled product, your tender is thrown out and you aren't considered. What basically happens is a public sector body like a municipality will issue a request for proposal through its standard procurement processes but stipulate that only primary aggregates can be used. The obvious effect of this practice is that recycled aggregates are not considered for use in many projects.

As I looked into this, I remember wondering, when there seemed to be such a strong consensus that more recycled aggregates could and should be used, why there was still so little actually being used. But, sure enough, I realized that a big part of the problem is this common procurement process, which rules out recycled aggregates from consideration.

What Bill 56 will do is end this practice of banning recycled aggregates from being considered. Instead, Bill 56's passage will hopefully lead to a more standardized, science-based approach whereby if a contractor can prove that the recycled aggregates they propose to use meet the necessary standards, then they will be allowed to include them in their proposal.

Recycled aggregates have proven to be as safe and reliable as primary aggregates. Guidelines for the proper use of recycled aggregates are already in place, were developed in consultation with provincial and municipal engineers, and are set out in the Ontario provincial standards and specifications.

There is no reason why someone should be prevented from competing for a contract solely because they propose to use recycled aggregates in their work. If a contractor can show that the recycled product he intends to use meets the required standards, then there should be no issue. If an Ontario business wants to submit a bid to build or resurface a road, then of course they should be able to use recycled aggregates in their proposal.

This is not something we should be stopping; this is something we should be promoting. Tonnes of reclaimed concrete and asphalt materials are currently being diverted from landfills to recycling yards, where it is re-engineered for use in many different infrastructure applications. This is a good thing. But with recycled aggregates being banned from so many bids, they end up sitting in stockpiles.

We all know that when it comes to land use questions in our communities, there are always strong reactions on all sides. This is as true for housing developments as it is for resource extraction operations like pits and quarries. I believe that our job as legislators is to be mindful of all sides and ensure that there is a healthy balance between what we want, what we need and what we can afford.

So, at the end of the day, when we know we need aggregates, and we'll always have a demand for them, why wouldn't we promote the use of recycled aggregates and relieve some of the pressure for primary aggregate extraction at the same time?

Promoting the use of recycled aggregates in Ontario by passing Bill 56 is the right thing to do, because it is about helping to address our critical need for aggregates while at the same time helping to preserve the finite supply of land from which we extract it.

I sincerely hope all of my colleagues here today agree with me and vote to support Bill 56, the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act, this afternoon. It's good for the environment; it's good for business; it's good government policy.



I look forward to the debate and hope I was able to convince the members that they can support Bill 56.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Fraser:** I'm pleased to speak today on Bill 56, the aggregate recycling act, and I'd like to thank the member from Caledon—

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Dufferin-Caledon.

**Mr. John Fraser:** —Dufferin-Caledon—I knew I was going to do that—for bringing it forward. Thank you very much for correcting me.

I just wanted to say that, as a new member of the Legislature, my first committee assignment was the Standing Committee on General Government. I got the agenda and it said "Report writing, ARA." Little did I know that that was the Aggregate Resources Act and that the committee was reviewing that.

I arrived at committee, and it was evident to me that I'd arrived at the end of a very long process that a lot of people had put a lot of hard work into, a lot of effort. I felt a bit like a carpetbagger, because there's all this work coming forward and now my name is going to be on this. But I'm pleased to be there.

Some of the people who worked hard on that bill include the member from—

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Dufferin-Caledon.

**Mr. John Fraser:** —Dufferin-Caledon—I know; I keep doing it the wrong way—and the member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock—I'm glad she didn't sponsor this bill, because I never would have got it if I had to do it straight out—and I know the member from Prince Edward-Hastings was here as well.

1450

I know that they consulted extensively and that they travelled extensively. They also came to my hometown of Ottawa; I learned a few things about Ottawa, that we have the largest number of pits and quarries—which I guess is not surprising in some ways; we have such a big land mass—and that the municipality of Ottawa has managed quarries and aggregate resources really well, and also managed rehabilitation well.

All three parties in the Legislature have worked together on producing this report, and the committee has heard from a wide range of stakeholders on how we can improve the regulatory regime for our aggregate sector and the management of this important resource that is key to our infrastructure and economic growth. I know we all look forward to the report being tabled in the Legislature.

We can all agree that expanded use of recycled aggregate material is something that we can support and encourage. Some of the benefits the member mentioned today are less going into landfill, it's good for business, and it also helps to extend the life of our quarries and pits so that we can better manage those primary resources that we have.

I was pleased this morning that the member mentioned that our own Ministry of Transportation is a leader in terms of using aggregate resources in road building, and

that our government encourages the use of recycled aggregate in aggregate applications wherever possible. The use of recycled material in road building grew substantially between 1991 and 2006, from six million tonnes to approximately 13 million tonnes a year. This represents about 7% of total aggregate production, and about 18% of the total aggregates used for transportation and construction.

Not all recycled materials are appropriate for all applications, in the same way that primary materials are not appropriate for all applications as well. In the right application, we know that recycled aggregates are as good as primary sources. Recycled materials must meet the same Ontario provincial standards as do aggregates from primary sources.

In some cases, recycled materials are not locally available, necessitating longer haul distances, so the environmental benefits aren't as great. So sometimes it's not practical for us to use recycled materials and—

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Well, we can do better than 7%.

**Mr. John Fraser:** That's true; I agree.

Now, if we're going to use recycled content, it's going to require an effective quality assurance program to evaluate the materials, the workmanship and performance for compliance with the specifications, because these materials that we are using are going into crucial infrastructure—roads, buildings—so we want to make sure, from an engineering perspective, that these materials are satisfactory.

In the case of some municipalities, they don't have those resources and the expertise that they require to make sure that this occurs, so we have to work with our municipalities if we are going to go forward on encouraging them to recycle, to make sure that they have these resources, that they're able to manage this. If you don't have an effective QA program, recycled aggregate suppliers are under no obligation to meet minimum standards and may cut corners and reduce costs to increase their competitiveness for work.

The Ministry of Natural Resources is considering opportunities to promote and remove barriers to the use of recycled aggregates, such as:

- improving general public and stakeholder education and awareness of recycled aggregate products;

- encouraging municipalities to consider using and incorporating recycled aggregate products into their own projects and those in their municipality;

- considering opportunities to make recycled products more cost-effective through pricing tools; and

- working with partners to establish strategic research priorities and possible funding to support research that moves aggregate recycling forward.

I would like to thank the member for bringing this bill forward. I also thank her for the work that has been done at committee, not just on the issue of recycled aggregates, but rehabilitation, land use planning—it's a very extensive review, and recycling is an important part of that, and I thank her for that.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate? The member for Kawartha Lakes-Haliburton-Brock.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Close enough. Thank you, Mr. Speaker—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I thought I'd intentionally do that to see how you'd react.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I'm very accommodating.

I'm pleased to rise today to join in the discussion of Bill 56, the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act, put forward by my colleague from Dufferin-Caledon.

I've been fortunate for the past year and a half to be a member of the committee on general government, where we have conducted a comprehensive review of the Aggregate Resources Act. During our review, we heard many stakeholders in the aggregate, construction and demolition industries, as well as municipalities and community groups.

I want to also welcome the visitors who are with us here today in the gallery. We travelled to a number of locations in the province, visiting several pits and quarries. I think the women also outnumbered the men in a lot of our tours, which was surprising to our researcher, Jerry Richmond, who did a fabulous job.

One issue that all members of the committee, regardless of the party, agreed on was the need for aggregate recycling and conservation to be embedded into public policy. The member from Dufferin-Caledon has risen to the occasion and is proposing this motion today.

The implications of this legislation reach beyond those directly involved in the aggregate industry. The bill, which was appropriately introduced on Earth Day earlier this year—my colleague is very perceptive—will also preserve the land from which the aggregate is extracted.

By promoting the use of recycled aggregate, Bill 56 will slow the extraction of primary aggregate and increase the value of recycled resources. Proposals for new quarry sites have been a contentious issue in several areas of the province; I think we've pretty much all experienced that. Increasing our usage of recycled aggregate materials will lessen the demand for new quarries.

We have to recognize that aggregate is not a renewable resource but is definitely a reusable one. Recycled aggregate is safe, reliable and a readily available alternative to primary aggregate sources. According to the Ontario provincial standards specifications, recycled aggregates have been proven to be as reliable as primary aggregates.

So if a company can safely and economically complete a project using recycled aggregates, they should be allowed to participate in the request-for-proposal process for public projects. Ontario businesses should not be left out of the bidding process for public sector projects solely because they propose to incorporate recycled aggregate, but that's exactly what happens across Ontario because of many municipal bylaws, which stipulate the projects can only use primary materials. There is not a valid reason for prohibiting the use of recycled aggregate for public contracts. As my colleague said, three million

tonnes of recycled aggregate are readily available in stockpiles across the province.

Let's listen to what residents, industry and municipalities have told us: Remove the barriers to use this underutilized resource. The member from Dufferin-Caledon has taken an important step forward in making Ontario a leader in aggregate recycling, and I want to support her wholeheartedly and encourage the rest of the Legislature to certainly do the same.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I will be supporting this bill, because I think it's a good bill. But you didn't doubt it, I hope.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** No, I didn't. Not for a moment.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** No. We have been working on this issue for quite some time—for a long time, in fact. You forgot to mention me. It's okay. The member from Ottawa South forgot to mention that. But that's okay, because I said, "When I speak, I'll just remind the folks that I was there."

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** You had it written.

This is not a topic that excites people. I understand that. Because as soon as you say "aggregate," all of a sudden, people watching say, "Get the channel changer. Change the channel." Because the majority of people just don't have a clue what aggregates are. It's true. So you have to begin the discussion by defining aggregates.

Except for the people who are affected by extraction of aggregates, the majority of people just tune out. But the definition of "aggregate" in the act is the following: "gravel, sand, clay, earth, shale, stone, limestone, dolomite"—I had to look it up; it's a sedimentary carbonate rock—"sandstone, marble, granite, rock or other prescribed material." That's aggregate. Once you define it you can say, "Okay, now we can talk about it," I would think.

**1500**

This topic of recycling is a very important one because the whole problem of aggregates is that it's a limited, non-renewable resource. You cannot continue to plunder the land forever—you can't. At some point, you have to say, "How do you slow that down?" The way you slow it down is through recycling. We have to commit to greater recycling, and this bill is an attempt to speak to it. But the member knows and we all know that this was the subject of a long discussion in the hearings because there were many, many people who appeared before us who said, "We have to do more of it."

In Britain, they recycle much, much more than we do, and understandably. They've got a smaller geography there. They have to recycle more, and it makes sense. I think the rate of recycling there is about 30%, if not much greater.

We don't do badly here. As the member from Dufferin-Caledon pointed out, at the peak, we recycle 20%, at least through the Ministry of Transportation, which is quite good. It varies from year to year; some



years it's 17%, some years 18%, and at the highest level it was 20%. That's a good thing. It's something that we can be proud of, obviously, but it also means, when we find that only 7% of all of Ontario recycles, that's a low number and that's nothing to be proud of.

We need the ministry to be a leader in this, not just in terms of what it does but what the ministry and the government ought to do across the broader public sector. That's really what we're talking about. We need to make sure that recycling becomes part of what the ministry does, part of what it thinks about and part of what incentives it needs to offer other municipalities or, indeed, the broader public sector to make sure that we do more of this. I think the report does that.

To be fair, we've had a good relationship with all three political parties.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** We worked with the member from Eglinton—Lawrence, who was part of that committee as well. We worked as best as we could. There was some disagreement on some areas, but on the whole, we tried, all three political parties, to do our best to come up with better recommendations to deal with the Aggregate Resources Act. I think, when people see the report in a couple of weeks, they will see that good changes have been made. I know that there will be people who say, "You could go farther"—I know that. But I think this review and what we have done moves the agenda a lot better than where it is at the moment.

What the member's bill does, and she pointed it out very clearly, is it would prohibit certain restrictions on the use of aggregates in performing public sector construction work—and this is a good thing. Why we haven't done more of that in the past is beyond me, but we can't complain about what has happened; we have to move on and talk about what we need to do from now on.

It is good to have the industry on board and it is good to point out that the Ontario Road Builders' Association, with the assistance of the Ontario Stone, Sand and Gravel Association, developed a best practices guide to promote industry recycling standards for aggregates—and that's a good thing that they have done. When the industry is on board, that's a very useful thing for us all, because it means they're not putting any roadblocks, it means they want to be partners in greater recycling, and that allows the government to go as far as it needs to go to make sure that we recycle a lot more of the aggregates without plundering Mother Earth as much as we sometimes do.

Why is this good? It's good because the current act, the ARA, does not currently contain specific provisions regarding the recycling or conservation of aggregate. The good thing about doing it is that, at individual construction sites, the on-site reuse of recycled materials results in less haulage, which means less disruption to those communities that are affected and it means that there are cost savings. That cannot be a bad thing; it can only be a good thing. And it means savings for public agencies responsible for the maintenance and expansion of public infrastructure.

There have been some cities that have led on this, and we need to say that. The city of Toronto has been good at doing recycling. The city of Hamilton has been doing it for a while. Guelph and the regional municipality of York accept the use of recycled aggregate materials in their municipal construction projects. It's good to mention them because what we want is for other municipalities to jump on board.

We understand that there are technical difficulties. We understand—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Peterborough is doing it as well?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Starting.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Starting. Well, that's a good thing.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Oh, they're late. Peterborough is late.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** But it's good to hear that Peterborough is starting.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I always have to get a plug in, just to let everybody know I'm here.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** No; if it is true, I wanted to mention it out loud for your benefit, member for Peterborough, so that the people watching say, "What about me?" But it is good that there are other communities that are coming on board.

We understand that some municipalities do not have the technical expertise to assess the quality of that recycled material. If that's the case, it makes it very difficult for them to jump on board. But that's where the government, through the Ministry of Transportation, is able to jump in and say, "We can help you, and how do we help you to do that?" So we need to—

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Help is on its way.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Right. I'm glad to hear that.

We need to provide incentives to municipalities to jump on board. We could obviously order that they do it, but that may not be very helpful because they might be upset at that, and there may be some costs that some municipalities may not be able to afford. So we have to, as a government, find the right way to help many of these municipalities that simply do not have the resources or the competence or the expertise to be able to do that.

The report does talk about some of these issues, and this is a good thing, and we recognize that we need to do that. When people see the report, they will recognize that we have done a fairly good job of making recycling a reality in this province.

The provisions contained in Bill 56 are very good, I think. Obviously we have to send it off to committee to get a better sense for many about what the positives are and what the negatives are. If there are negatives, we should know what they are. I personally don't see any, but there are some people who are saying that if we use recycled material, the prices may go up. We should talk about that. Could prices jump up in a way that is artificial as opposed to real? That's something we might look at, and I'm sure there would be people who would be interested in talking to that.

With respect to incentives, it would be good to have municipalities and others come forward to tell us what kind of help they need and what kind of leadership they are expecting from the province that would make sure that many of these municipalities are not left behind but they can come on board as quickly as they can. By doing this, we will alleviate some of the fighting that goes on with each and every aggregate extraction that happens in our communities. It doesn't matter where it is. Wherever it is, whether it's on prime land—and we heard from many people saying that it shouldn't happen on prime land; it shouldn't happen in the Niagara Escarpment. Many communities say that it shouldn't happen anywhere. There are many communities who say that if it goes below the water table, we shouldn't be extracting rock whatsoever, even though we've been doing it for a while. Many say that environmental assessments have been done and therefore it's okay. But people have concerns about water, and right they are, because there are accumulative effects of extraction in many communities that could affect and do affect the water, and we need to worry about that. People are worried about that. We touch on that in the report.

1510

I think that people will be able to see we have done our best—all three political parties—to advance the agenda on this review, but particularly on recycling as well.

I'll be supporting this bill. We think it's a good bill, and it's for that reason that we mention the member from Dufferin-Caledon in our bill as a way of saying this is okay. We look forward to debating the review as soon as it comes forward.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I know that the member from Trinity-Spadina mentioned that we had a very good learning experience, as MPPs, as we travelled across the country as part of the aggregate review committee, and I know that the member from Dufferin-Caledon was on the committee, as well as the member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock. I think it was the first time in the history of this Legislature that members of the Legislature actually visited quarries and aggregate sites right across the province. We even went to Manitoulin Island to check their unique extraction method on the island—they ship everything by ship through the Great Lakes and so forth—and we went to the huge ones in Caledon. We were in some restored sites, too, that have been made fertile and green.

So we learned a lot, as MPPs, and I certainly thought the member from Dufferin-Caledon had a real, sincere interest in the committee looking at the increased use of recycled materials in road building etc. It makes ultimate good sense to do this, because when you use recycled materials, you take the pressure off virgin land that doesn't have to be used basically as a pit. You also take the pressure off the road infrastructure. Municipalities claim there is a lot of truck traffic, a lot of dust, a lot of

noise as a result of aggregate extraction across the province, and there is.

But as the member from Trinity-Spadina will tell you, the reality is we need to have aggregate. I used to ask people in my riding—they would have big stone houses, and in front on their lawn they would have a sign saying, "Stop the mega quarry." I would say, "Well, where did the stone come from for your house and your pool in your backyard? Where did the concrete come from for your pool? Building the school or the hospital or the new road you want along the 407 comes from Ontario aggregate."

The reality is we have to protect our farmland, we have to protect our watercourses, our aquifers, but we also have to understand that this is a vital industry for Ontario. It's a vital natural resource that should be protected because it's not limitless, certainly not in southern Ontario, especially when it has adverse effects. The member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes will tell you about her issues; the member from Caledon will tell you about the trucks and extraction issues.

This is part of the solution. The member from Dufferin-Caledon has brought forward part of the solution. It's a very pragmatic step forward that I would encourage all members on both sides of the House to support, because it means that we start using material that's been taken from cities and former road sites or whatever—it's reused. MTO, the Ministry of Transportation, has proven you can do it. They've been using recycled aggregates for about 40 years. We found out that MTO uses about 20% recycled aggregates in their road construction—20%.

The sad thing is, municipalities are lacking in using recycled aggregates. They all say, "Well, our engineers don't like recycled aggregates," and we asked them why. "Well, back in 1962 there was a road that wasn't up to par because they used recycled." Well, the new technology, the testing that is done and the new demands made on quality control make recycled aggregates very appropriate, very safe and of high standards. If MTO can use it on their superhighways, there's no reason why municipalities can't start to use it; as the member said, some municipalities are, like Toronto, Guelph and others, but not enough. Municipalities, I think, are only using about 3%.

Municipal leaders came to the committee, and we asked each one, "How much recycled aggregate do you use?" They had no idea: "Well, our engineers don't know. We don't know. We'll look into it." I don't know if they ever got back to you.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Or they didn't want to admit it.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I don't know. They were playing dumb.

We said, "You know, you could save money. You could take the pressure off farmland by using recycled aggregates. You can create jobs in recycling," but the municipalities, generally, have been very opposed to using recycled materials. The question is, the carrot or the stick—



**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I was talking about the carrot a bit here; I was just getting to the carrot.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I'm pleased to rise in support of Bill 56, the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act, which my colleague the member from Dufferin-Caledon tabled earlier this year. In fact, the member and I have spent a lot of time together reviewing the Aggregate Resources Act in committee over the last year, and I have witnessed her commitment to this issue—in fact, we will call her our little “rocks star”—and her determination to bring forward a legislative reform that would save taxpayers money, create jobs and protect our environment. So I'd like to thank the member for her hard work on this important bill.

As I had mentioned, last year, when I travelled across the province as part of the Aggregate Resources Act review group, I had the opportunity to hear from many residents, municipal officials and industry representatives. Everywhere I went, I always heard support for using more recycled materials for public sector projects.

Still, there are a number of roadblocks preventing this practice in the public sector. In fact, many municipalities stipulate that they will not accept bids from companies that use recycled aggregates, and that is just not right. I am sure we can all agree that public sector projects should not be limited by requirements specifying that virgin or primary aggregates be used in construction, especially when recycled aggregates have been proven to be just as safe and reliable. I hope we can also all agree that no company should be prevented from bidding on contracts simply because they want to use recycled aggregates during construction.

Well, we have the power to start the process to reform these two problems today, by voting in favour of the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act. Bill 56 would ensure that recycled aggregates are fairly considered for all public sector construction and that no company is barred from this work just because it uses recycled aggregates.

With more than five million tonnes of recycled aggregate materials stockpiled around the province, taking this action just makes sense. These resources could be put to good use, in a way that saves taxpayers money and stimulates growth in the recycling industry while protecting our environment.

That's why, as PC environment critic, I am particularly pleased with Bill 56. It creates the right economic conditions to allow companies operating in a free and open market to deliver real results for our environment. At a time when our province ships roughly a third of our waste, or four million tonnes, to the United States every year, we need substantive policy changes like Bill 56 to improve overall waste diversion.

With this in mind, I would encourage all members in this House to vote in favour of Bill 56.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** It's a pleasure to join in the debate for Bill 56, the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act, introduced by my colleague the member for Dufferin-Caledon. It's a bill I am proud to say I support. Ms. Jones has done an exceptional job in outlining all the details of the legislation and why it is a good bill, so I won't spend my time recycling her comments.

1520

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Steve Clark:** That was okay; that worked.

I do want to talk about a company in Leeds-Grenville, George Tackaberry and Sons, which celebrated its 55th year in business last year. I'm pleased to call George a friend. You won't find a business owner in Ontario who cares more about his employees or his community. His equipment has built and maintained countless roads in the united counties of Leeds and Grenville, but it's really his heart and generosity that have helped make the communities dotting those roads the places that my constituents love to call home. I could go on and on about him, Speaker, but I'm going to identify some points in Bill 56.

There's no single piece of legislation—certainly not a private member's bill—that can settle the emotional debate about aggregate extraction. However, I want to compliment the member for Dufferin-Caledon. She has done a remarkable job in Bill 56 to bring forward a thoughtful and balanced proposal to help meet Ontario's demand for aggregate.

The growing demand for stone, sand and gravel is a good thing. It's something that all of us want, if we're truly committed to getting the province's economy back on track. You can't grow the economy without aggregate. Roads, bridges and, yes, subways just don't get built with thin air.

To meet the demand, Bill 56 creates an opportunity to use more recycled aggregate in public construction projects. As a number of speakers have said earlier, we know that there are three million tonnes of recycled aggregate now stockpiled across the province. I want to give credit to the heads of the Ontario Stone, Sand and Gravel Association, the Ontario Road Builders' Association, the Ready Mixed Concrete Association of Ontario, the Ontario Hot Mix Producers Association, and the Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association, who stated in a joint letter to all of us here in the Legislative Assembly—I'll just give you one quote: “We know that incorporating recycled aggregate into construction projects makes good environmental and economic sense.”

Both sides of this debate see Bill 56 as a common-sense, practical way to alleviate the pressure on primary aggregate and the land it comes from. So I'm going to ask everyone to consider—when they're getting ready to vote on this—some of the issues that we deal with in this place, some of the divisive and emotional issues, the challenge that the member had to draft a private member's bill that's doing some substantive work by people

who, quite frankly, sometimes can't decide on what the colour of the sky is. At least you know with me that I'm always going to say it's blue.

In this bill, the member has really addressed a need, and I hope and I pray that all members will support Bill 56. Congratulations to the member for Dufferin-Caledon.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** I'd also like to thank the member from Dufferin-Caledon, who has been a mentor to me personally as well.

I rise to speak to Bill 56, the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act. If enacted, Bill 56 would prohibit any public sector person or body in Ontario precluding the use of secondary aggregates in public sector construction work. This is not to say that there aren't already public sector bodies currently incorporating recycled aggregate into their construction work. The Ministry of Transportation is a prominent beacon of hope in this regard. But we can always do more. It begins with changing the way we frame the process.

Many, if not most, municipalities specify as part of their RFP process for construction work that only 100% virgin material will be considered. The result of this is a bid process tilted toward primary aggregates. That boosts market demand and means more quarries. The government of Ontario and the MUSH sector—municipalities, universities, schools and hospitals—represent the largest users of aggregate in this province.

Using recycled aggregate obviously eases the burden on our environment. This is why the measures proposed by Bill 56 can have such a positive effect. The fact is that quarries have a huge impact on their host communities, and they are vigorously resisted—the Nelson proposal in the shadow of Mount Nemo or the enormous Highland mega quarry are two recent examples.

While we need aggregate for our new construction projects, the aggregate itself does not need to be new. As Bill 56 points out, there are more enlightened solutions available to us, so I am very happy to support this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Dufferin-Caledon, you have two minutes.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I very much appreciate the feedback I have received on Bill 56. There's a joke in my office that I have no shortage of ideas. Some of them are great ideas; some, not so much. But the reality is, whether I have the idea or not, I need other people to implement it.

I want to particularly thank Jerry Richmond, in legislative research. He was our researcher for the ARA. Jerry and I have spent a lot of time on the phone and in person talking about rocks, and I really enjoyed his counsel.

The other person is my executive assistant. Kevin Weatherbee has worked hours and hours and hours preparing the background material to make Bill 56 a good piece of legislation. I am very proud of what we've been able to bring forward for debate. I really do believe it will actually make a positive change and can improve the situation in Ontario, and I just want to thank Kevin

for all the work he did preparing for this debate this afternoon.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. We'll take the vote at the end of private members' business.

NATURAL GAS  
SUPERHIGHWAY ACT, 2013  
LOI DE 2013 SUR L'AUTOROUTE  
DU GAZ NATUREL

Mr. Bailey moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 97, An Act to encourage the purchase of vehicles that use natural gas as a fuel / Projet de loi 97, Loi visant à encourager l'achat de véhicules utilisant du gaz naturel comme carburant.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I'm honoured to rise in the House today and discuss what I believe is a very important bill, Bill 97, An Act to encourage the purchase of vehicles that use natural gas as a fuel or, as I am calling it, the Natural Gas Superhighway Act, 2013.

I would like to begin by recognizing the guests who have joined us for the debate today. They are seated in the members' west gallery. Joining us are Mr. Tim Egan, president and CEO of the Canadian Gas Association; Murray Logan and Wayne Blenkhorn, of Farom Energy Solutions; Ryan Shaw and Paul Ungerman, from Union Gas; and Mr. Ritchie Murray, Mike Tremayne and Rohan Service, from Enbridge. Sending regrets is Ms. Alicia Milner, president of the Canadian Natural Gas Vehicle Alliance. Please give them a warm round of applause.

Mr. Speaker, my guests are here today because they care about the direction of our province, as we all do. They believe, like you and I do, that natural gas as a transportation fuel is an opportunity to do what is right for both our natural environment and our business environment. In his recent 2012 report, A Question of Commitment: Review of the Ontario Government's Climate Change Action Plan Results, Ontario's Environmental Commissioner reports that because of the sheer volume of cars and trucks on the road today, Ontario's transportation sector continues to be the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the province.

Almost nine million vehicles were registered in the province in 2010, and because of increased trade, the development of supply chain management systems and just-in-time delivery models, the number of large freight vehicles on the road has doubled since 1990. Not surprisingly, this sector has witnessed a significant increase in its emissions. Today, of those nearly nine million vehicles on the road in Ontario, medium- and heavy-duty vehicles make up just 3% of that traffic, yet they



contribute almost 30% of greenhouse gas emissions that come from on-road sources.

If the government of Ontario is serious about reducing greenhouse gas emissions, then it is time that we, as legislators, look at offering real alternatives to those who operate medium- and heavy-duty vehicles in our province. One way we can do that is by leveraging the ongoing development of North America's vast gas deposits.

Interest in natural gas as a transportation fuel isn't new. Past support from federal, provincial and private sector initiatives led to over 35,000 light-duty natural gas vehicles, like buses, being put on the road in Canada many years ago. Unfortunately, because of previous market conditions, the critical market uptake needed to grow that market did not occur. But as we are all aware, in the last five years access to the supply of readily available natural gas in North America has changed that outlook dramatically. New opportunity is being created across this continent. Canada and the United States have been given the opportunity to dramatically shift their current energy supply makeup and, at the same time, stimulate their slow-growth economies. Even in his 2012 State of the Union address, United States President Barack Obama stated just that: "We have a supply of natural gas that can last America"—this continent—"nearly 100 years.... Experts believe this will support more than 600,000 jobs by the end of the decade."

1530

Don't let this message be misconstrued. Natural gas is not going to be the be-all and end-all of energy supply. Rather, it will be a very significant piece of that puzzle, an extremely abundant, safe and affordable piece which has yet to be recognized for its full potential.

Research and product development in the area of natural gas procurement and use is leading to innovative new technologies and product design that have the potential to reshape conventional thinking in many areas, including as a reliable, heavy-duty transportation fuel. In fact, in its assessment of the resource, Natural Resources Canada identified medium- and heavy-duty on-road transportation as the greatest value proposition for natural gas transportation fuels moving forward.

New, reliable truck engine technology that utilizes natural gas is giving North America's hard-hit cargo transportation sector a shot in the arm, reducing emissions, lowering transportation costs and delivering those critical cost savings to industry's bottom line. Heavy-duty manufacturers of trucks like Freightliner, Kenworth, Peterbilt and Volvo have all recently developed product lines to utilize liquefied natural gas, otherwise known as LNG.

The Natural Gas Superhighway Act, 2013, aims to promote the use of liquefied natural gas as a freight transportation fuel in Ontario by accommodating its advanced engine technology and providing that incentive designed to stimulate private investment in proven lower-emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.

Specifically, this bill calls upon this Legislative Assembly of Ontario to enable the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations prescribing higher weight limits for vehicles that use liquefied natural gas as fuel. Current road limits restrict vehicles to a gross weight of 63,500 kilograms. The equivalent required to run this cleaner, cheaper fuel can add as much as 1,500 kilograms to the weight of a truck using that fuel, versus trucks using the more traditional fuel.

In a day and age when transportation companies must maximize the use of their equipment to stay competitive, this small variance in weight allowance is enough to keep companies from taking advantage of this lower-greenhouse-gas-producing natural gas transportation fuel. Moreover, the Natural Gas Superhighway Act, 2013, would require the Minister of Transportation to table a progress report to this Legislative Assembly of Ontario annually until those regulations are made that support the use of LNG.

Mr. Speaker, we ask for this because we understand that not everything can be done overnight. But all that industry is asking for is that the government—this government—recognize the importance of natural gas as a transportation fuel. With that show of support by this government and this Legislature, I have heard from many private operators who believe the heavy-duty LNG vehicles are the logical choice for their companies. These same companies tell me that they are eager to make investments in Ontario by building the infrastructure such as refineries, refueling stations and maintenance facilities needed to support this next generation in transportation fuels and vehicles.

For an example, one needs look no further than my own riding of Sarnia-Lambton, where Royal Dutch Shell is building Canada's largest LNG facility to support the use of liquefied natural gas as a transportation fuel initially for Ontario's hard-working Great Lakes freighters. They've got one company currently, Interlake shipping, that's going to convert their fleet over time to natural gas. Anyone looking at this should be able to recognize this incredible opportunity that exists in the on-road transportation fuel sector, and marine and rail as well.

This Natural Gas Superhighway Act also proposes to provide for a non-refundable tax credit of half the HST, or 4%, for seven years to those taxpayers and fleet owners who would purchase these vehicles—trucks, ships and trains—that use natural gas, or LNG, as a fuel. This credit is intended as a small incentive to help those fleet owners and fleet operators to transition their fleets from traditional fuels to the new cleaner-burning natural gas, building that critical mass in the industry and speeding the reduction of greenhouse gases from traditional fuel sources.

Thanks to similar incentives and with an expected fuel cost savings of up to 25% to 30%, major American trucking companies are already making this transition. Moreover, the province of Quebec has taken early action by offering fiscal incentives to encourage their commercial fleets to purchase natural gas vehicles. The one main

fleet there is Robert trucking. These tax measures include an accelerated capital cost allowance on new trucks; a program for improving energy efficiency in road, rail and marine transportation which would fund up to \$15,000 per truck for alternative fuels; and investing in the infrastructure for what they call in Quebec the “blue corridor,” which is essentially the Quebec portion of the significant Windsor–Quebec City transportation and manufacturing corridor that also runs through Ontario—the Macdonald–Cartier Freeway.

In addition, Alberta has updated their highway regulations to allow increased weight allowances for LNG trucks on that heavy-haul route from Calgary to Edmonton to keep their oil industry afloat.

British Columbia has also made many investments to reimburse up to 80% of the price differential between a natural gas vehicle and a diesel-powered vehicle.

Robert trucking, as I’ve talked about, has invested in over 180 LNG trucks over three years; those trucks run from parts of Quebec into Toronto already. There’s a company in Alberta that has made a big investment. Waste Management has invested in trucks in both Coquitlam in BC—and 20 in Ottawa. Gaz Métro has invested in five LNG stations along the blue corridor in Quebec. Shell, Encana and Ferus are all making developments. I just heard, as early as an hour ago, that one of the rail operations could run all of their freight operations across all of Canada with, I think it is, five or six refueling stations. So it’s not a matter of, “Will this happen and can it happen?” It’s going to happen. Ontario needs to be at the table and we need to be a big part of that.

All told, these private companies’ efforts represent more than \$350 million of investment in this sector of the market. The business community is ready to step up and do their job. We as government and this Legislature need to step up and do our part.

The main artery of Ontario’s manufacturing economy, the Windsor–Quebec City corridor, has virtually no share of that investment, despite having the largest marketplace and the largest number of industry players ready to take advantage of this. If Ontario doesn’t take steps soon to open its borders to this same type of innovation and investment, it risks being left behind, and our businesses will fall further behind as they lose their ability to get their products to market at competitive prices.

I’ve heard from Loblaw’s as well; they’re willing to get behind this.

The time is right for the province of Ontario to seriously look at the promotion of natural gas as a transportation fuel. I believe that, after hearing the response of the Minister of Energy this morning in question period to a question I put to him, he also believes the same thing.

I ask members that are here today to support Bill 97, the Natural Gas Superhighway Act, 2013. By doing that, we as a Legislature can move this important piece of legislation to committee, where we can hear from all of the industry stakeholders about the importance of

opening the Ontario market to investment and opportunity. It comes with a clean, abundant and North American energy source.

To reiterate, the intent of the natural gas bill is to ask the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations about weight limits as well as require the Minister of Transportation to make a progress report every 18 months, and to provide for a non-refundable tax credit of half of the HST for seven years to those taxpayers who would purchase those vehicles.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for the time you’ve allowed me today and I want to thank all of my colleagues who are here today that are going to speak on this bill. I look forward to the rest of the afternoon and a very fruitful debate. Again, I want to thank all the stakeholders that showed up here today. I look forward to the rest of the debate.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I’m happy to rise today to speak to Bill 97, the Natural Gas Superhighway Act, 2013. I want to commend the member, first of all, for the title of this act. It’s one of the better ones I’ve heard; it reminds me of a rock-and-roll album or something.

Speaker, Bill 97 attempts to enable regulations prescribing higher weight limits for vehicles that use liquefied natural gas as a transportation fuel. It would also require the Minister of Transportation to table a progress report to the Legislative Assembly annually until these regulations are made. Bill 97 would also provide for a non-refundable tax credit in the amount of half of the Ontario portion of the HST, which is 4%, for seven years to taxpayers who purchase vehicles like trucks, ships and trains that use natural gas as fuel.

This is an interesting bill. I think it’s interesting in part because, typically, private members’ bills do not have financial implications. I’m curious about this one and what the financial implications are, because it seems to me that there actually would be lots of revenue here.

1540

I do agree with some of the environmental principles behind this bill, but I also have some questions about the feasibility of the incentives that Bill 97 proposes.

Let’s talk about the environmental considerations first. We know that the transportation sector in 2010 was responsible for the largest volume of greenhouse gas emissions province-wide. This sector has also witnessed a significant increase in emissions since 1990, while other sectors—electrical and industry—have seen a decrease.

Medium- and heavy-duty vehicles make up only 3% of the vehicles on the road today, but they contribute 27% of the greenhouse gas emissions from on-road sources. As a transportation fuel, natural gas represents a cleaner alternative to traditional fuels, especially diesel, for medium and heavy trucks, trains and ships. And so, in principle, I believe we need to support the transition to cleaner technologies from traditional fuels like diesel.

As many of you might know, the World Health Organization recently declared diesel-engine exhaust as a group



l carcinogen—along with arsenic, asbestos and tobacco—and it has now been proven, without a doubt, that exposure to diesel exhaust causes lung cancer. As you know by now too, Speaker, this is one of the main reasons that I and members of my community have serious concerns about the use of diesel trains on the Union Pearson Express air-rail link.

Just to bring the audience into this discussion here, I represent a riding just west of Queen's Park, and it's a riding that could definitely use better transit. The good news is that there is transit coming, and there is transit coming that is going to take people from the airport down to Union Station—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Order.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** Thank you, Speaker.

But the train that's being built is a train that is not going to serve our communities at all. In fact, our communities are going to—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I will ask the speaker to speak to the Chair rather than the audience. If I could have a little bit of quiet in the room, I would be able to hear what he's saying.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** Thank you for the reminder. Speaker, through you to members present today, just to let people know: This is a transit plan, but it's the wrong kind of transit plan. We're having a discussion here about cleaner fuel technologies, and yet the government of the day is moving forward with a transit plan that is not going to reduce greenhouse emissions and is not going to improve air quality. In fact, it's going to make people in the west end of Toronto sick, and it is a colossal waste of money. When we are able to build new transit using clean technologies, the government of the day is choosing a diesel fuel. That is just the wrong path.

In our case, in Davenport and in the west end, where cleaner technology does exist through electrical energy, we should move to use it. I will be curious to see how the government votes on this bill today, when they are clearly on the wrong path when it comes to the diesel trains that they are building right now.

Anyway, getting back to the bill, Bill 97: There are various options for the conversion of heavy transport vehicles to natural gas, and they should be seriously considered. Options should also be considered for the critical importance of on-road freight transportation to our provincial economy. In Ontario alone, the number of heavy-duty on-road diesel vehicles more than doubled between 1990 and 2008. Within the greater Toronto and Hamilton area, between 70% and 90% of freight is moved by truck.

Unlike most other sectors of the economy, the transportation sector relies almost exclusively on a single energy source, which is crude-oil-based fuels, to meet the vast majority of its energy needs. Meanwhile, the price of diesel fuel in Toronto has increased by 165% since 1990, which is another reason why we should not be creating new diesel trains in this situation.

Liquefied natural gas vehicles generate a fuel cost savings of 20% to 30% for heavy transport operators. Those lower transportation costs could mean savings to Ontario businesses along the supply chain. So there are definite reasons to explore options for the use of natural gas.

British Columbia, Alberta and Quebec—these provinces have already adopted legislation to promote natural gas as a transportation fuel, as well as American jurisdictions, such as New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Colorado, California, Texas, Oklahoma and Louisiana. But the mechanisms that they have used are different than the ones in Bill 97.

There are other considerations with Bill 97. Natural gas still does produce greenhouse gas emissions, just not as much as diesel fuel. While the cost of natural gas right now is lower, we do not know if the cost of natural gas will remain so.

**Interjection:** Diesel used to be cheaper, too.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** That's right.

Fracking technology is primarily responsible for the current low prices in natural gas, and there are real environmental concerns about the use of fracking technology.

Serious questions remain about the potential environmental impacts of shale gas exploration. Concerns include massive water extractions, potential contamination of drinking water and watersheds and significant greenhouse gas emissions. These concerns have been raised by respected individuals such as Dr. David Suzuki and Ontario's own Environmental Commissioner, Gord Miller.

In 2011, Quebec put a moratorium on fracking until the province has conducted a detailed environmental assessment. New York state has a moratorium, which they are currently debating extending until July 2013, to allow for environmental studies to occur.

In the fall of 2011, Niagara regional council passed a moratorium on shale gas exploration—

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The Minister of Rural Affairs, I'm having difficulty hearing the speaker.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** Thank you, Speaker.

In 2011, in the fall, Niagara regional council passed a moratorium on shale gas exploration due to environmental concerns. The Environmental Commissioner of Ontario has raised concerns about fracking—as I mentioned; so has the Council of Canadians and others who are campaigning for a moratorium across Canada due to dangers to water, increased greenhouse gas emissions and dangers to wildlife.

So with these outstanding environmental concerns, we believe that these should be addressed before we go forward with this technology when it comes to shale gas.

In addition to these environmental concerns, it's also not clear if Bill 97 uses the appropriate financial mechanism. In British Columbia, for example, they have taken another route. The government passed a regulation

that allows utility companies to deliver natural gas transportation programs until March 2017.

Under this regulation, the utility companies can offer incentives to transportation fleets that use natural gas, such as buses, trucks or ferries. Companies can build, own and operate compressed natural gas fueling stations or liquefied natural gas fueling stations. They can upgrade these facilities to provide training to safely maintain natural gas vehicles.

The non-refundable tax credit of half of the Ontario portion of the HST—this would require federal amendments to the tax act to make this incentive operational, and we have not traditionally seen a great deal of co-operation when it comes to the provincial government of Ontario and the federal government of Stephen Harper, and we would need to see that co-operation if this was actually to occur. So even if this bill was passed, it would not—from my understanding, anyway—actually be possible without co-operation from the federal government.

Also, the nature of this bill seems to make it a money bill, as I mentioned, which generally is not something we allow in private members' business.

That said, I think it's worth getting this private member's bill to committee, and so we will be supporting it. We definitely want to hear from experts on how the details of a natural gas conversion financial incentive might work and should work.

I think it's somewhat ironic to hear from the other two parties—well, we haven't heard from the government yet at this point—but parties that are all too willing to subsidize some of the energy sector. So when it comes to our nuclear facilities, the real costs of nuclear energy are tremendous. We're going to feel that for generations. It's highly, highly subsidized. We have a government that is paying for an exceptionally expensive fuel when it comes to diesel, a very costly fuel when it comes to the health of the community, with this expansion of the air-rail link, and they have no problems paying for that.

1550

We have an opposition party that resists any kind of support for green energy, and we have both parties, the provincial government here and the federal Conservative Party, that have cut back the most sensible energy plan of all, which is to actually not use energy in the first place. It's to conserve it; to make sure that we're using it wisely. Instead of making the necessary investments when it comes to energy conservation and supporting home energy retrofits, both the federal government and the provincial government have cut those things. That is disappointing, Speaker. Now they're willing to subsidize another energy source here, but as I said, I think there are worthy environmental implications of doing this.

Ultimately, I'll support and agree that there is a benefit for the environment and to our economy in converting from heavy diesel transport to natural gas, so I look forward to the comments from the other parties. I'll stop there.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** It's a pleasure to join the debate on Bill 97, which is An Act to encourage the purchase of vehicles that use natural gas as a fuel. I congratulate the member from Sarnia-Lambton for bringing this bill forward. When he told me he was bringing forward a bill that involved the use of natural gas as an alternate fuel for vehicles, I was quite encouraged by that.

I will say at the outset that I personally plan to support this bill. There are some issues, I think, with the bill. I'm not sure if the approach that's being taken with the changing of some of our weight allowances is the right way to go, but I don't think as a Legislature we should let that stop us from investigating this bill further because in some other regards, it's got an awful lot of merit.

When you look at the comparison, the potential we have for natural gas vehicles, when you compare to the fuel that's being used, either gasoline or diesel, it emits about 20% to 30% less CO<sub>2</sub> and 70% to 90% less carbon monoxide. Nitrous oxide emissions can be reduced almost up to 100%. PM, particulate matter, can be reduced by 90%, and VOCs can be reduced by 90% as well. When you compare those two fuels together, I think any jurisdiction would be foolhardy to not take a serious look at using it as an alternate fuel.

When we compare ourselves with the United States and with other jurisdictions around the world that have natural gas-powered vehicles, we'll see that the entire country, in my opinion, isn't doing what it should be doing. In the States, for example, depending on what you classify as a vehicle, they claim that anywhere from 120,000 to 260,000 vehicles are used in the United States today that are powered by natural gas. If you look across the continent, and that's primarily in the United States, you've got about 1,000 filling stations that provide the network to provide the fuels for those.

So why would you use natural gas? Well, right from the start, I think, you've got to look that it's cheaper. It's about 50% cheaper when you start to use some of the costs. It's cleaner, as I said earlier; it's got about 80% less particulate matter, 20% to 25% less greenhouse gas emissions. Also, we're finding there's an increased supply. Ontario is well positioned. The storage capacity we have and the market we have will be attracting natural gas from the south, from Pennsylvania and also from the west, where we've traditionally received our supply from. So it's not like we're short of natural gas.

Certainly, when you look at oil, when you talk about peak oil, you start to realize that we do need to go a different way on this. This brings us less soot, less smog, and when you look at the pollution that comes off our highway system, quite often we blame industry for pollution in our society and we kind of forget it's often our own cars and vehicles that are providing the majority of that pollution and of the degradation to our air quality.

It's quite simple, when you look at it. I'm not a scientist or a chemist, but when you look at natural gas, it



simply has less carbon than the other fuels. Natural gas is CH<sub>4</sub>: one carbon atom and four hydrogen atoms. Diesel fuel, by comparison, is C<sub>15</sub>H<sub>32</sub>. Gasoline is C<sub>8</sub>H<sub>16</sub>. So you've got many more carbon atoms, much higher carbon content in the other fuels when you compare them to natural gas.

I'm suggesting that by supporting this bill, we keep this conversation going. In the province of Ontario, we need to get more natural gas vehicles on the road. The way we do that, I think, is to ensure that we've got a supply route—a supply along the existing trucking routes—and encourage our transit systems to use natural gas as an alternate fuel.

That infrastructure does not exist today. I know there is the one trucking company that stands out above all others in this regard, Robert, and they've put in their own system between Quebec and Ontario that their own trucks use privately. I think they're hoping to expand that.

I think there's enough potential that we need to keep this conversation going. As an individual, I will be supporting this bill; I think some of my colleagues will as well. Once again, I want to thank the member from Sarnia-Lambton for bringing forward what I think is a very good bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** As PC environment critic, I'm pleased to rise again today to support yet another private member's bill that will help improve our economy and, of course, our environment. I'd like to thank my colleague the member from Sarnia-Lambton for the work he's done in the preparation of this bill, and I hope everyone in this House will join me in moving this bill past second reading today and into law.

Like I always say, good environmental policy should also be good economic policy. Bill 97, An Act to encourage the purchase of vehicles that use natural gas as a fuel, follows this rule. Technology is getting more sophisticated every day, so government must keep up with these changes in order to stay competitive. The recent development of vast shale gas deposits in North America has driven up the demand for this low-cost fuel source: natural gas.

Estimates suggest that natural gas will last us well into the next century at a lower cost than oil. On average, natural gas vehicles use 20% to 40% less fuel than conventional vehicles. That's why American trucking companies are transitioning their fleets to run on natural gas. They understand the significant opportunity for cost savings, which can amount to as much as 40%.

Ontario must not fall behind. We need to create the right conditions to encourage Ontario consumers and companies to make the switch. To do that, Bill 97 would alleviate the financial risk of investing in new cars and trucks by offering a time-limited, non-refundable tax credit for the purchase of vehicles that use natural gas as a fuel. Those who wish to make this investment would receive a tax credit that is equal to half of the HST the

purchaser paid on that vehicle. Purchasers would then have to ensure that they pay back the HST on the truck in seven years.

If implemented, this sound policy change would not only stimulate economic activity, it would also produce real results for our environment. According to the Canadian Natural Gas Vehicle Alliance, natural gas vehicles produce 20% to 25% less CO<sub>2</sub> emissions than conventional vehicles. In fact, the alliance also states that one in five trucks is more than 20 years old.

If you take both of these numbers into consideration, one in five trucks will have to be replaced in the near future, so why not encourage companies to choose vehicles powered by natural gas? That just makes sense. In fact, it makes more sense than penalizing Ontario drivers by forcing them to get a flawed and unnecessary Drive Clean test under a program that has become nothing more than a government cash grab.

As we look five years down the road, natural gas vehicles will be able to operate on renewable natural gas produced from biogas from organic matter. In fact, according to Natural Resources Canada, using 100% renewable natural gas will reduce 85% to 90% of our carbon emissions. It is crucial that Ontario takes the lead and starts powering its transit, buses and transport trucks with natural gas.

I think we can all agree that this is a very practical approach to keep Ontario competitive in a global economy and keep our air clean. That is why I would encourage every member in this House to vote in favour of Bill 97.

I'd like to thank the member for Sarnia-Lambton for bringing forward this very crucial and important piece of legislation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

1600

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** It's great to stand up and talk in a supportive way about this bill from MPP Bailey from Sarnia-Lambton, my good friend, with mutual friends in Chatham and Oil Springs and our deep connection to a former minister under Bill Davis, Lorne Henderson. His daughter is my best friend. See? We can get along; I'm best friends with Lorne's daughter.

Anyway, I'm up, happily, to talk about Bill 97, An Act to encourage the purchase of vehicles that use natural gas as a fuel. Like the member from Oakville, I am supportive. I think there are some things we need to work through on this, and a conversation that needs to keep going, but in principle, the PMB that encourages the purchase of vehicles that use natural gas as a fuel by amending the Highway Traffic Act and subsequent regulations, and the Taxation Act, is a PMB that I think is worthy of future consideration and work.

These amendments would address weight issues associated with both compressed- and liquefied-natural-gas vehicles and provide a tax credit or subsidies to the purchasers of such vehicles.

As the Liberal government has made some progress in this area, I think it's important to highlight what some of those are. We have reformed weight laws that took into consideration maximum weights which we could allow on roads while doing the least amount of damage to our infrastructure and maintaining safety. We've made some progress as an Ontario government on this issue.

As we all know, natural gas is indeed safer and cleaner for burning fuel, and good for our environment and good for air quality. It generates significantly fewer greenhouse emissions, particularly fewer carbon monoxide and nitrous oxide chemical components that are very harmful to our health, so I think that's something else we can all agree on.

It is important to note that natural gas vehicles are attracting greater interest, both for intercity and intra-city applications, because of the cost savings around it. However, this kind of technology that we are talking about is still evolving, so there are some issues around reliability, cost, fuelling, infrastructure, dealer support and so on that do require some further research and examination.

Ontario is really, though—it's important to remember—a leader in clean technology. We have a Premier who sees the world and where it's headed going forward in the new economies of the 21st century. With our government's clean initiatives, we are positioning Ontario for the future, ensuring we have that infrastructure in place, be it a smart grid, a sufficient power supply or changing infrastructure. We all want to make sure that Ontario is in front of this and is not left behind.

Overall, I think this is a worthy bill. I know the member from Sarnia—Lambton has put a great deal of work and thought into this, so I applaud him for that. I think—well, I know—that I can be supportive of this, and I hope others will be too.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate. The member for York—Simcoe.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** A point of order, Mr. Speaker: I just wanted to draw the attention of the assembly that we have with us a former parliamentarian, David Turnbull.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you, and welcome.

Further debate.

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** I'd also like to commend the member from Sarnia—Lambton, who has done a wonderful job on this. I am pleased to rise to speak to Bill 97, the Natural Gas Superhighway Act. This bill seeks to encourage the purchase of vehicles fuelled by natural gas. It proposes to do this by way of a tax credit to taxpayers who purchase certain vehicles fuelled by natural gas. The purchase price for natural gas vehicles can be higher for operators, but the life cycle savings make switching attractive. This credit would lower the cost of entry.

Switching to natural gas offers broad benefits to public and private operators. The trucking sector is a key one, as this bill suggests. Transit is another.

Roughly one in six buses in Hamilton's transit fleet is now powered by compressed natural gas—CNG, for short. That city was an early adopter, starting in 1985. At

peak, half of its buses were running on natural gas. But Hamilton began shifting over to diesel and hybrid diesel-electric models since 2004, because of concerns with early CNG technology. The buses were costly to run and repair, which was burning a hole in the balance sheet.

Across the bay, my home riding of Burlington had about a third of its buses running on early CNG systems in the late 1990s. These were retired between 2002 and 2005 for the same reason as Hamilton.

But the fuel market has changed dramatically in recent years, and so has engine technology. New emissions standards benefit natural gas engines more than diesel engines, because natural gas is cleaner, and life cycle carbon emissions for natural gas buses are about 20% lower than their diesel counterparts. Enormous natural gas reserves have been tapped or identified across North America. The Geological Survey of Canada estimates that our own Arctic region contains a reserve of 97 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

In response to all of this, the market has grown by leaps and bounds. A quarter of all new bus orders in the United States are for CNG vehicles. Major American trucking companies are beginning the transition to natural gas as a fuel source, and a more efficient generation of CNG vehicles has arrived.

Diesel, on the other hand, is not looking its best. Diesel prices have climbed by about a third in the last four years and are projected to climb further yet over the next four years. In that same time, CNG prices have tumbled by about a third and are expected to decline further until 2017, then climb modestly. Diesel prices are much more volatile than natural gas prices. On a life cycle basis, CNG-powered vehicles have become competitive with gasoline-powered vehicles.

Trucking and transit operators in the United States have responded accordingly and, slowly, Canadian operators have as well. This year, Hamilton has taken a serious second look at shifting its fleet back to CNG. In doing so, it joins Calgary, which plans to purchase 200 CNG buses in the next decade.

It's not just dollars-and-cents equations. Natural gas vehicles promote energy security, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and cut pollution and noise at street level, all of this in addition to more predictable operating costs. These are changes we should be encouraging, and I am pleased to support Bill 97.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** It's a delight to have the opportunity to get a few words on the record this afternoon in support of Bill 97, as presented by my good friend the member from Sarnia—Lambton.

I just want to say I have a long-standing relationship in my part of Ontario, the Peterborough area and eastern Toronto, with Enbridge Gas, who do such a terrific job in terms of providing a great service to both businesses and residents in my riding of Peterborough. I just want to thank them for the great job they do.



One of the leaders of the gas industry in Ontario, I was told, was in Toronto last night, a man who has affectionately been called, over the years, the Duke of Kent, the Honourable W. Darcy McKeough, who represented the riding in southwestern Ontario for many years.

When Mr. McKeough completed his very distinguished political career here at Queen's Park—a minister with Mr. Robarts and Mr. Davis, of course—he was chair of the board of Union Gas for a number of years. Of course, Union Gas was headquartered in Chatham, Ontario.

For those who are interested in political trivia, the Honourable John Robarts was the godfather for at least one of the McKeough children of Darcy and Joyce. That was a long-standing relationship.

I guess I'd better get to the bill here.

**Interjection:** We're not going to object.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** They're not going to object, of course.

The Peterborough Petes are playing tonight at the Memorial Centre, and of course we want to wish them well.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Tickets are available?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Tickets are available. I hear the member from Durham. I could get him a box seat, if he wants to take the opportunity—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** —and my good friend the member from Oshawa. They could both be there in the box seats getting, getting a great view of the Peterborough Petes.

Sorry, Mr. Speaker. I've got to get back to the bill here.

1610

I think this is a great opportunity for extensive use of natural gas in vehicles. Just this afternoon I took a look at that extension of the 407, right at Lake Ridge Road. They're doing a tremendous amount of work there, and as they extend that eastward it would be a real opportunity to have vehicles that are powered by natural gas.

It's interesting, of course, that supply has decreased significantly, particularly from the American Midwest. They've found all this shale gas due to fracking. There's more gas coming into the market, so we've got to look at innovative ways that we might be able to use that product to help us fuel the economy in the province of Ontario.

The member from Sarnia-Lambton, I think, has hit upon a very good idea that we need to explore further. I want to congratulate him. He was one of the leaders, along with the member from Hamilton East-Stoney Creek, with the One Call system that's being accepted right across Ontario. That was a partnership with Union Gas, Enbridge and many other utilities to make sure that we don't do unnecessary digging, but get it right, improve safety and protect citizens right across this great province.

Bill 97 is very consistent with what the member has been doing since he arrived here in 2007—Mr. Bailey, is that correct?

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I should have been here much sooner.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** He should have been here much sooner.

I still see him as one of the progressive members of that caucus over there, and you can see that with this legislation that he's bringing forward.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'm very privileged to be filling in this afternoon for our energy critic, Mr. Fedeli from Nipissing; by the way, he's our finance critic as well. I want to congratulate Mr. Bailey from Sarnia-Lambton as well because he was very diligent in picking out the right people to comment on this bill. It's been, quite seriously, unanimously supported. It seems like the NDP is somewhat warm to this issue, as well as the Liberal caucus, from their comments.

If you put it into perspective, it is simply the right thing to do. Some of the background that Mr. Bailey has provided for us is convincing evidence, and he's done a great job on a couple of other bills that are non-partisan and have received support of the House. I'm sure we'll hear more about that in the next while under the Local Food Act.

I can only say, too, that this past week I had the privilege of meeting with a number of people who work professionally. I met with the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers' Mr. Dave Collyer, as well as the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association's Dr. Brenda Kenny. Dr. Kenny was talking to us about the important advantages—natural advantages, I might say—of natural gas. The Canadian Natural Gas Vehicle Alliance is a non-profit organization espousing the use of natural gas and liquefied natural gas, as it is a much cleaner fuel. It is 20% to 30% cheaper and it is actually very friendly to the environment.

You can look at the implications of the alternative for the trucking industry, which is diesel. Diesel itself creates a 77% greenhouse gas increase and 71% growth in energy use; 3% of vehicles but emit 24% of the greenhouse gases from on-road sources; 40 tonnes of greenhouse gases per year if a truck drives 125,000 kilometres. The evidence is clear that we need to provide some leadership for the alternative, the alternative being liquefied natural gas, which Mr. Bailey's bill espouses.

In the detailed part of it, it isn't a huge subsidy or support for the industry, but what it does is allow you, over time, to receive a portion of the HST for the purchase of a vehicle. Companies, I'm sure, want to do the right things by having cleaner vehicles on the highway. There have to be a couple of amendments: one to the Highway Traffic Act, because liquefied natural gas is heavier, as well as the tax credit that you can get over time.

I commend Mr. Bailey from Sarnia-Lambton for the work he's done on this by reaching out and educating the members of all caucuses. I was very encouraged earlier today. Mr. Bailey asked a question of the Minister of

Energy, and it was my impression—you can interpret it sometimes; what they say and what they do are often different things—that he did support Mr. Bailey's question in his response. I think people could look at Hansard to see that doing the right thing actually is the right policy, and the right politics is simply doing the right thing.

Again, this has been a very cordial afternoon and it sounds to me like this will receive unanimous support. I'll certainly be supporting it, and I commend Mr. Bailey and the stakeholders that are here today. Doing the right thing is the right policy.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Sarnia-Lambton.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and it's a pleasure. Right now I want to thank all of the legislators that are here, members of the Legislative Assembly that spoke today. Particularly I want to thank the members for Davenport, Burlington, Durham, Kitchener-Conestoga, Oakville, and the Minister of Consumer Services and the Minister of Rural Affairs, who also spoke in support of this bill—or at least general support, if not full support. It was a pleasure to hear their remarks.

I look forward, if this bill is passed and moved on to committee, to where we can take those improvements, we can bring people from industry, bring people in from the general public and get their ideas to make this a better bill, if it's to pass, and do the right thing for the province of Ontario.

I also want to commend the Minister of Rural Affairs. He mentioned the gas stored at Dawn township; we call it the Dawn hub. The member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex and I share that. He's got part of it in his riding; I've got part of it in my riding. It's certainly a well-known industry in our area and they're doing a great job there. There's Enbridge as well. They share the province in the work they do in gas and safety. It was a pleasure to work with them on the One Call bill as well.

Also, I want to mention that 50 years ago today the Robarts government was elected. There were a number of members that came to this Parliament from all three parties. What changes we've made. Just before I conclude, I had a chance to look through that, and it's amazing how society has changed. I looked through it and there was only one woman elected 50 years ago today, so what a great improvement in this Legislature. We have all these lovely women from all three caucuses that are here with us today, and I think it has made the Legislature a better place. I hope my wife was watching back home when I said that.

Anyway, thank you, Mr. Speaker, again. I won't belabour the afternoon. I know everybody has had a long week and it has been tiring. I know the Liberal Party is going to Hamilton. They're going to have a great big convention this week. I'd like to go down there and see what they're up to. Anyway, thank you again to everyone who has spoken in support of my bill. I want to thank my executive assistant, Anthony, who put a pile of work into this, and into helping me, and my former assistant, David

Donovan, who has gone on to bigger and better things with the feds.

Thanks again, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to be here today, and thank you for your support.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

## INTER-PROVINCIAL IMPORTATION OF WINE, BEER AND SPIRITS ACT, 2013

### LOI DE 2013 SUR L'IMPORTATION INTERPROVINCIALE DE VIN, DE BIÈRE ET DE SPIRITUEUX

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** We will deal first with ballot item number 40, standing in the name of Mr. Milligan.

Mr. Milligan has moved second reading of Bill 98, An Act respecting the importation of wine, beer and spirits from other provinces.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Milligan?

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** Government agencies, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member has requested that the bill be referred to government agencies. Agreed? Agreed.

## AGGREGATE RECYCLING PROMOTION ACT, 2013

### LOI DE 2013 SUR LA PROMOTION DU RECYCLAGE DES AGRÉGATS

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Ms. Jones has moved second reading of Bill 56, An Act to prohibit certain restrictions on the use of aggregates in performing public sector construction work.

Is it the pleasure of the House the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Dufferin-Caledon.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I request that Bill 56 be referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member requests that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs. Agreed? Agreed.



NATURAL GAS  
SUPERHIGHWAY ACT, 2013  
LOI DE 2013 SUR L'AUTOROUTE  
DU GAZ NATUREL

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Bailey has moved second reading of Bill 97, An Act to encourage the purchase of vehicles that use natural gas as a fuel.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Sarnia–Lambton.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I'd like it to go to the committee on government agencies.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member has requested that the bill be referred to government agencies. Agreed? Agreed.

ROYAL ASSENT  
SANCTION ROYALE

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I beg to inform the House that in the name of Her Majesty the

Queen, His Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been pleased to assent to certain bills in his office.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker):** The following are the titles of the bills to which His Honour did assent:

An Act to amend the Co-operative Corporations Act and the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of non-profit housing co-operatives and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les sociétés coopératives et la Loi de 2006 sur la location à usage d'habitation en ce qui concerne les coopératives de logement sans but lucratif et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.

An Act to establish a Financial Accountability Officer / Loi créant le poste de directeur de la responsabilité financière.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Orders of the day?

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Monsieur le Président, je propose l'ajournement de la Chambre.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The minister has moved adjournment of the House. Agreed? Agreed.

This House stands adjourned until next Monday, 10:30 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1622.*

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Holyday, Douglas C. (PC)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
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McDonnell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
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<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation

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<b>Shurman, Peter (PC)</b>	Thornhill	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
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Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
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<b>Tabuns, Peter (NDP)</b>	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
<b>Yakabuski, John (PC)</b>	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones



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Helena Jaczek, Jane McKenna  
Paul Miller  
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# Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

# Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

## Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

## Journal des débats (Hansard)

Monday 30 September 2013

Lundi 30 septembre 2013



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

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Deborah Deller



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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 30 September 2013

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 30 septembre 2013

*The House met at 1030.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I know the Minister of Northern Development and Mines will want to say—I'm not going to steal all your thunder.

But I do want to introduce to you today Dr. Brian Stevenson, Ms. Debbie Comuzzi and Richard Longtin from Lakehead University, who, by the way, have a campus in my riding, in Orillia. They have 700 new first-year students this year. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I'm very pleased to follow the member for Simcoe North. Dr. Brian Stevenson, of course, is the president and the vice-chancellor of Lakehead University; Deb Comuzzi is the vice-president of external relations; and Richard Longtin, the director of government relations, is here as well. This is their Queen's Park day, and they'll be meeting with many members of the Legislature. There's also a reception this evening from 5 to 7 in the dining room, which we want to invite everybody to. Let's welcome our friends from Lakehead University.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I'm pleased to introduce some family members of page Erica George. You may remember Lauren George, who was a page last time around. Her sister Vanessa George—a future page, perhaps?—is here to join with and watch her sister Erica George.

Apparently, their aunt Charmaine Reid—I know, Speaker, that you may have noticed this in my bio. I actually had the honour of representing Notre Dame College School at the all-Ontario badminton championships back in 1986, I believe it was. Charmaine was about 10 years younger. She beat me handily. That's because she was an Olympic badminton player. She's a proud member of the Niagara Peninsula and a long-time friend. Charmaine, it's great to see you again. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I'm delighted to draw attention to members from the Retired Teachers of Ontario sitting in the west gallery. Thank you for being here. One I know quite well: Leo Normandeau, who is in my riding and the immediate past president. Welcome, all.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Speaker, I ask all members to join me in welcoming two very special visitors to the members' gallery today: Andra Capannelli and Natalie Capan-

nelli. Both will be joining me for lunch today, along with their mother, Heather MacGregor, who some of us will remember from her work here at Queen's Park.

Also joining us for lunch today will be page James Prowse, because both of these young ladies are interested in one day being part of the page program, and I thought, "No better way to introduce them to that than to have them join us for lunch with page"—here he is right here—"James Prowse." Let's hear it for page Prowse.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The timing is impeccable.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I'm proud to introduce, and ask all members to welcome to the House today, James St. John, the business manager at Central Ontario Building Trades; Steven Martin, business manager, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 353; and Jack Barbosa, business manager, Marble, Tile and Terrazzo, Local 31.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I'm really happy to introduce Peter Vanderyagt from Pickering-Scarborough East to the Ontario Legislature today. He's here with the Retired Teachers of Ontario to take part in the first annual seniors' day at Queen's Park—a very good friend; welcome, Peter—as well as well as Marjorie Blake from Pickering-Scarborough East. It's wonderful to have them here today.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's my pleasure to introduce Margaret Howard from Leith, the same birthplace as famed painter Tom Thomson. We invite everyone to visit the Tom. She is the grandmother of page William Howard-Waddingham. Joining her is Helen Hatton from here in Toronto, best friend, godmother and number one fan of William Howard-Waddingham.

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** We are joined today by some 100 seniors from different organizations celebrating the very first seniors' day at Queen's Park. We are joined by members from the Ontario Gerontology Association, the Municipal Retirees Organization Ontario, the Ontario Coalition of Senior Citizens' Organizations, the Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, the United Senior Citizens of Ontario, and the Retired Teachers of Ontario. I'd like to welcome them all, Mr. Speaker, and remind all the members that there's going to be a reception after question period, so join us in room 228.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm going to use Speaker's prerogative and continue the introductions to ensure that—there are some wonderful visitors here. We want to see them all. But I'm also going to use this moment to remind us to please just do the introductions, and I'll get to everybody inside of the five minutes.



**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** Our great page from Whitby—Oshawa, Pratah Bhatt, is page captain today. I'd like to introduce his family, who are in the members' gallery: Pranav Bhatt, his father, is here; Falguni Bhatt, his mom, is here as well; and Sanat Bhatt, his grandfather. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I would like members to join me in welcoming Sue Morgan, a friend, a constituent and a community activist, who's in the Speaker's gallery with us today.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I have two sets of guests to welcome. One of my great constituency staff members, Carol Clarke, has brought her friends Bob and Doris, so please welcome them to Queen's Park.

And from the Ontario Gerontology Association, on behalf of my seatmate, Julia Munro, I would like to welcome their executive director, Norm Shulman.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It is my pleasure to introduce Mary Gavil, who is here from Mississauga, as well as Bernard Jordaan, who is the president of the United Senior Citizens of Ontario, as well as Maria Descalos. They are here to support the Ombudsman oversight bill this afternoon.

I also want to mention the Ontario Gerontology Association—I l'Association ontarienne de g rontologie—the Municipal Retirees Organization Ontario, the Older Adult Centres' Association of Ontario, the Ontario coalition of services for seniors, the Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse and the retired teachers' association in support of—

1040

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I was just clearing my throat. To the member for Nickel Belt, I just wanted to let you know I was clearing my throat.

The member from Scarborough—Agincourt.

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to welcome the parents of page Daniel Velyvis: his mother, Linda Chow-Velyvis, father, Mr. Vytas Velyvis, and grandmother Ngan Sau Chow. Welcome to the Ontario Legislature.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** It's my distinct pleasure to welcome Harold Brathwaite, the distinguished educator and a former director of education in the Metro and Peel district school boards. Welcome.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I was going to welcome Harold and all the other members of the Retired Teachers of Ontario. If there are any RTO members who haven't been specifically named yet, welcome to all of you. I would like to note—I don't think he's come in yet—my constituent Simon Leibovitz is the communications officer at RTO and he's, I think, still to come in.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I would be remiss not to score some brownie points myself, so I would like to introduce a friend of mine, my former grade 7 teacher, June Szeman, retired teachers' association—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Hang on, I've got some more for you. She was one of these people who actually did start teaching when she was 17 years old, so

that means she's very young right now. That's an extra brownie point.

Anyway, I thank all of our visitors for being here, and thank you for your indulgence in not making speeches when you're introducing someone.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### JOB CREATION

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** A question to the Premier: Premier, one of the common issues I hear from parents is that they are concerned about their sons and daughters. They usually characterize it that their daughter has her university degree or their son has a college diploma and they thought by this time in life they would be on their own, in their own place making their way in the world, on their own career path. But they're back home with mom and dad. Instead of occupying a job, they are occupying the couch. They're getting frustrated with this province.

When asked on Friday when you will produce your jobs plan, you told the media to ask you in six months. Premier, it is unacceptable to wait another six months after nine months of delay and 10 lost years. When will we actually see your jobs plan tabled? These people cannot wait another six months.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I just want to put the comment in context because when I was asked, the youth employment fund, the \$295 million that we are investing to put supports in place for young people—that opened on September 23. I was asked by the media a couple of days after and I said of course we want results, but it was a bit too early.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, as of today, according to the ministry, there are 535 youth employment fund placements across the province, 126 more than anticipated. So in fact, the results are already coming in, and I anticipate we will hear more good news about that fund in the days to come.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** You know, Speaker, I remember when the PC government set the stage for a million new jobs in the province of Ontario and we led North America in job creation.

Frankly, Premier, we had agreed with you to—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm waiting. Keep it down.

Please finish.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** You know, Premier, we had agreed with you. You had suggested a number of bills; we agreed to pass those bills in a programming motion with the goal of clearing the deck so we could focus on jobs and the economy. The programming motion was tabled a couple of days ago and your only response to date was to tell everybody to wait six months, and then to launch a website on the weekend, I guess, which was noplan.ca.

Premier, waiting six months is far, far too long. Our plan is out there. I beg you: Steal any ideas in our plan; bring something forward to actually put people to work and entrepreneurs back in business in our province. Surely—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I remember when the PC government wrought havoc across this province in terms of our education system and our health care system. In fact, many of us are here because of the undermining of the contracts that we had in this province in terms of civil society that were really blown apart by the PC government.

What I would say to the member opposite is that we have a plan in place. Evidence of that is investment in the Ford plant: \$70.9 million that we put in place to protect more than 2,800 jobs, and our introducing of the small business act, which will help 60,000 small businesses by helping them with their payroll tax. The Youth Employment Fund, as I have already said today, is showing results: 535 placements across the province, according to the ministry. There is much already under way, and our ongoing connection with the people of Ontario is very important.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplement—

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Quite frankly, Premier, these are all warmed-over ideas that you stole from the NDP. We saw what an incredible mess—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** They're applauding that, but we know what an incredible mess the NDP made of this province. They drove our economy into the ditch, and we're not going there again.

Premier, no questions asked, take any of our ideas. There's no charge. We actually want to get on with the job of creating jobs in the province of Ontario, an Ontario that's number one for jobs and last in debt, not the other way around. We put ideas on the table to get energy costs under control, to make sure we lower the cost of doing business by lowering taxes, to actually move forward with apprenticeship reform so young people can get jobs in the trades in Ontario, not Saskatchewan and Alberta. Pick all three; pick one. But surely, Premier, pick something. It's part of the job. Let's get on with it. Let's move our province forward and create some jobs.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Here's what we're getting on with. If the observers from the PC Party at our provincial council on the weekend had heard what I said, they would know that investing in people, investing in the infrastructure that's necessary and investing in a dynamic business climate: That is the plan; that's the framework; that's what we're doing. All the specifics, Mr. Speaker, fit within that framework—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Shouting people down is not really what we should be doing here.

Please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I reject the notion that's coming from the other side that driving down wages with harmful legislation that would undermine all of the good work that organized labour has done for the last decades, firing 10,000 education workers and firing 2,000 health care workers—that's not a plan; that's just a blueprint for destroying the province once again. We're not going to go there.

## PAN AM GAMES

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** While young women and men are facing a job market worse than the Rust Belt states, while the Premier's only response is to tell them to wait six months for her plan and to launch the new website wehavenoidea.ca, she is rewarding, however, the Pan Am executives and board members whose expenses I'm sure the Premier will agree are a wanton abuse of taxpayer dollars.

Premier, you said you would be different. You said that you would not follow the same pattern of behaviour for the culture of entitlement of the Dalton McGuinty Liberals. Let me ask you then, Premier: When did you become aware of this abuse of taxpayer money at the Pan Am Games?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that there are expenses within that report that are unacceptable. Three weeks ago, the minister responsible for the Pan Am Games asked the board to review their policy and strengthen it where appropriate. It's unacceptable that public dollars would be spent in that way. My hope is that all the other two levels of the government, both the city and the federal government, will take the same action, because we have already taken action on tightening up those rules.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Thank you, Premier, but with all due respect, doing another study is not taking action. Ending the free ride on the backs of taxpayers: That's actually taking action, and you should get on with that job.

According to Pan Am executives, there was a provincial audit. There was an audit done, supervised by the province, I think a number of months ago. It says that they passed that audit.

So I'll ask you this, Premier: Will you table today the results of that provincial audit and then tell us exactly what you did when you found out about this extraordinary abuse of taxpayer funds?

1050

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I've already said that the minister responsible for the Pan Am Games has told the board that the rules need to be tightened. The rules were followed, but they need to be tightened up, Mr. Speaker, and that is what is happening.

What I think we need to do is make sure all levels of government—because all three levels are involved in get-



ting ready for the Pan Am Games—are taking the same tack and that those rules are tightened.

The Pan Am Games are going to be fantastic. The Pan Am Games shine a light on the province, on our talent and the beautiful cities that will host the different events.

We need to make sure that all the rules are tightened, as the minister has asked, and get ready for the best Pan/Parapan Am Games ever.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** We have the best hopes for the Pan Am Games and the Parapan Am Games. We know it can be a success, but we can't have that kind of success when you see this kind of abuse of taxpayer dollars, expensing everything from Starbucks coffees to lavish trips and dinners for the executives. If they've reached that culture of entitlement two years before the games take place, how bad is it going to be in two years' time? The test is, Premier, what are you actually going to do about this?

I want to give credit where credit is due. My colleague the member from Barrie, Rod Jackson, has risen time and time again in this House to point out accountability problems. If your minister is AWOL, if you're not looking out for taxpayer dollars, then Rod Jackson and the PC caucus are prepared to do so.

Will you join our call for the auditor to do a complete review of Pan Am expenses to make sure they're going to the right place and not to this kind of abuse? Will you do that, Premier?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** We've already taken action. The minister has already given instructions to the board to tighten the rules. We are already reacting. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition: The rules should be tighter; there should not be that kind of entitlement. So we've already taken action.

I think we need to make sure that the dollars are spent wisely, that there's good judgment in place and that the rules are appropriate. At the same time, I hope that the Leader of the Opposition and the leader of the third party will join with me and join with the federal government and the municipal government to make sure that these are the best Pan/Parapan Am Games ever, that we showcase Ontario in the very best light and that we involve people from all communities, including schoolchildren, who can be inspired by these fantastic athletes. That's our objective.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound will come to order. Do you get the hint?

New question.

## COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. When I met face to face with the Premier just weeks ago, she told me that closure motions that shut off debate weren't in her plans. Now, the Premier is supporting a motion to shut down debate on a series of bills, including one custom designed to help construction giant EllisDon, one of her party's biggest donors. Why did she forget to mention that to me at our meeting, Speaker?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** We did not have an explicit discussion about programming motions, and I think the leader of the third party knows that. What we talked about was our ability to move ahead, to get some legislation passed on which there is agreement. Within the programming motion there is the opportunity for debate. There's the movement of bills to committee and lots of opportunity for input, not just from members of the House but from people outside in the public.

I think that what we have put forward is absolutely consistent with the conversations I had with both the Leader of the Opposition and the leader of the third party, where I said, "You know what? Where there's agreement, let's move this legislation ahead. There are lots of areas where there's disagreement, but let's try to move ahead where we can find that common ground."

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The Premier likes to talk about worthy bills being slowed down in the House, but the bill written for EllisDon has sailed through the House past dozens of other bills with a fraction of the debate, despite significant controversy.

In our meeting, the Premier never once mentioned this bill. How did it suddenly become such a priority, Speaker?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Here's the reality, Mr. Speaker. There are three parties in this House. There's our party, there's the Progressive Conservatives and there's the NDP. When I had a meeting with the leader of the third party—she's right—this particular bill didn't come up. When we met with the Leader of the Opposition, that is a bill the Leader of the Opposition wanted to put forward. The reality is that in a minority government we need to work—all of us—together. So I'm working with both the opposition and the leader of the third party. That's how the particular mix of bills got into the programming motion.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** A lot of people have raised serious questions about the Liberals' eagerness to ram legislation through the House at the behest of a single well-connected company. This issue is still being fought in the courts. But instead of respecting that process, the Liberals are working with the Conservatives in an undemocratic attempt to ram through changes at the behest of one well-connected company. Why won't the Premier respect the process and stop her undemocratic attempts to ram this bill through this House?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I think the leader of the third party knows that all of the bills that are within the programming motion will go to committee. They will be subject to a vote, Mr. Speaker. This is a private member's bill that was put on the list of bills that the opposition was interested in moving ahead on. To characterize a programming motion that's going to go through debate in the House, debate at committee and debate in the House again as ramming I think is really a misrepresentation of what's actually going to happen.

This is a bill that was put forward by the opposition, by a private member. It is part of the overall programming motion, which includes many pieces of legislation that I know the leader of the third party and her members support.

### COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also for the Premier. Can the Premier tell us whether she or her staff discussed the EllisDon bill with the company or anyone working on behalf of that company in the last six months?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure of the scope of the leader of the third party's question. What I know is that this is a private member's bill that was brought forward by a member of the PC caucus. And within that programming motion, there are a number of pieces of legislation that I know that the leader of the third party and her members support: the Local Food Act; the tanning bed legislation, which will prevent cancer in young people; consumer protections—the wireless phone contract rules to help consumers. My hope is that the leader of the third party will be able to support those and doesn't think that we should drag out the process around those pieces of legislation, because we all support them and we should move those ahead.

The fact is that there was another private member's bill that was brought forward, but I hope that the leader of the third party will support those pieces of legislation that her members have already claimed they support.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Published reports indicate that the bill was crafted by lobbyists at StrategyCorp as a Conservative private member's bill so it wouldn't look like the Liberals were violating collective agreements yet again. Can the Premier confirm or deny that report?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, I can't even follow the convolutions of that question. The fact is, it's a private member's bill that a member of the opposition has brought forward. My hope is that the leader of the third party will see that the pieces of legislation that we're bringing forward—the Local Food Act, the tanning bed legislation, the consumer protections—that she will understand that the programming motion is intended to deal with those pieces of legislation where we can find agreement. And on many of them there's agreement among all parties in the House.

That was my objective in meeting with her and meeting with the Leader of the Opposition, to find a way to move ahead those pieces of legislation where there was agreement. I think that's how minority Parliament should work, Mr. Speaker. I hope she will accept that as these pieces of legislation go through, they will go to committee, there will be input and they will come back to the House for a vote. That's how it needs to work.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, when I met with the Premier two weeks ago, at the beginning of this session, the challenges facing EllisDon weren't even on the agenda. At the time, the Premier actually agreed that the challenges facing families in this province should be our main priority. But now we see a bill, championed by well-connected Liberal and Conservative insiders working on behalf of a company making billions of dollars annually, somehow becoming a top government priority.

1100

When is the Premier going to stop the excuses and the evasions and explain to people why she's making it her priority to help well-connected insider Liberal friends?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Our priority on this side of the House is to create jobs and light a fire under the economy by investing in people, investing in infrastructure and investing in a business climate that is going to bring business to this province and is going to create jobs. That's our priority, and that's what's happening.

I'm sure the leader of the third party will be happy to know that, already, the \$295-million Youth Employment Fund is creating those jobs; it's creating those placements—535 placements, Mr. Speaker—and the fund only opened on September 23.

That's our priority. Job creation is our priority, and it will stay our priority as we continue to work with the members of the opposition.

### PAN AM GAMES

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** My question is to the Premier. Early in my business career I learned that to get the outcomes you want, you need to inspect what you expect. You permitted the minister of the Pan Am Games to use taxpayers' money to write a blank cheque for all the needs and wants of the multi-million dollar TO2015 executive, including things like Starbucks coffee, pet travel—travel for pets—and Advil.

Premier, talk is cheap. Will you remedy this today and ask them to repay all expenses that were made in bad faith? Yes or no?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let me just say I have already answered this question. I've already said that the minister responsible for the Pan/Parapan American Games has instructed the board to tighten up those rules.

But, Mr. Speaker, the member—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Hold on—the member of the opposition makes a very good suggestion. If there are



expenses that are inappropriate and are not within the rules—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, come to order.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite makes a good point. If there are expenses that fall outside the rules that have not been paid back, then they should be paid back. I agree.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** That's good. Maybe we're getting somewhere here today.

Premier, it's important—you're right—that the Pan Am Games shine the light on TO, not on the endemic waste that's going on in your government.

The minister's credibility for Pan Am oversight has diminished with one spending scandal after another. The TO2015 organizing committee executive salaries are greater than those of the Prime Minister, the police chief of Toronto and the mayor of Toronto. Plus let's not forget the significant bonuses they get just for completing their jobs; we don't even know what those numbers are yet.

Then let's talk about the duplicate 62-person secretariat, costing us an extra \$2.8 million per year and counting in administrative costs. And the latest: unlimited expense accounts—just what this government doesn't need, and not what the people of Ontario need.

Premier, will you allow the Auditor General oversight of your latest scandal-plagued portfolio?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let's just be clear. I've already said that the minister responsible has talked to the board and has instructed that the rules be changed. Also, let's remember that all levels of government—federal, provincial and municipal—are involved in the administration of the Pan/Parapan Games.

Let's also remember that this is a very significant investment of dollars and energy into what will be job creation—26,000 jobs showcasing Ontario as a place to visit, as a wonderful venue. This is an extremely important investment in the future of Ontario, and I agree with the member opposite that where there are rules that need to be tightened, they absolutely should be. That's why the minister has already instructed the board to do so.

#### COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** My question is to the Premier. Last year the Premier told reporters, "I have never thought that we should legislate collective bargaining." Why is she now breaking that promise with the imposition of Bill 74?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Labour, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I appreciate the question from the member opposite. In relation to the particular bill he is raising, I do want to inform the House, and I'm sure

members know, that late Friday afternoon we received a decision from the Divisional Court that looked into the decision of the Ontario Labour Relations Board that has been raised in that particular bill. In the review of the decision, the court have quashed the decision of the Ontario Labour Relations Board.

We, of course, are closely reviewing the decision, which came late Friday, and we'll have a better understanding of what that decision means, but it seems at the moment that the company can continue to operate under the status quo as part of the decision of the Divisional Court.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** The minister is right that the decision is still before the Divisional Court. But why intervene through this legislation? Why intervene in collective bargaining rights—it defies logic—through this House? This special EllisDon deal has the potential to completely negate hundreds of existing labour agreements which have nothing to do with that company.

Does the Premier think that the interest of one major donor is so important that she is willing to ram through a bill that will help one singular company and negate hundreds of existing functional agreements between workers and employees?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Let me just try one more time and correct the member opposite. The Divisional Court has rendered a decision. It came out late Friday afternoon. In that decision, the Divisional Court reviewed the decision of the Ontario Labour Relations Board that is subject to Bill 74 and have quashed the decision of the Ontario Labour Relations Board. It gives a pretty strong indication that the status quo as it relates to the company in question stays intact. We are reviewing the decision—it came late Friday afternoon—and we will have a better sense in coming days as to the meaning of the decision.

#### SENIOR CITIZENS

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** My question is to the minister responsible for seniors' affairs. Today is older adults' day at Queen's Park. Many seniors' groups and advocates from Ontario are here to meet with local MPPs. Among those participating, I would like to specifically recognize those visiting from my riding of Scarborough–Rouge River who are here in the gallery. I thank them for their work and advocacy.

One thing that I have been hearing from constituents in my riding is on the issue of safety and security for older Ontarians. Can the minister please inform this House of some ways the government is protecting seniors in Ontario?

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** Thank you very much, Speaker. Through you, I want to thank the honourable member for his question. It is a good question.

Let me say, Speaker, that you, every member in the House and the member from Scarborough–Rouge River have the firm commitment of this government, and mine, as the minister responsible for seniors, to have our

seniors live in a healthy, safe environment, whatever that may be. With respect to the government, we are the first one in Ontario and in Canada to introduce a strategy to combat elder abuse, which is a strategy aimed to improve the coordination of community resources, to build capacity of front-line staff, and to increase public awareness as well. We have already committed and spent—invested, I should say—\$8 million, and \$900,000 on a yearly basis.

For me, it doesn't matter where seniors live. They live in one Ontario, and they all deserve to be living in confidence and in dignity.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** It is good to hear that our government is taking serious efforts to ensure that seniors are being protected. As a matter of fact, I am hosting a community health fair at Malvern Town Centre this Saturday. This information will be something that I will make sure to pass along to seniors.

Many seniors that I will meet this Saturday will want to know that they will be able to live in their own homes for as long as possible. Staying at home provides them the independence and dignity that they need and deserve. Can the minister please tell us what this government is doing to ensure that seniors are getting the care they need so they may remain living in their own homes?

1110

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Thank you to the member for this very important question, one that touches so many of us.

One of the most important goals of our action plan for health care is to help seniors stay at home with the right supports, to make sure seniors have that opportunity, because home is where we all want to be. It's better than being in hospital or having to move to long-term care.

So we are increasing funding to the community sector; in fact, this year, a 6% increase over last year—that's \$260 million more this year than last year—and three million more hours of personal support worker care over three years. We're investing in 30,000 more house calls by our doctors. Our Healthy Homes Renovation Tax Credit is helping seniors retrofit their homes so they can safely live in them longer.

This means more Ontarians are going to be able to live where they want to live, in their own homes, for as long as possible.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** Madam Premier, I received a copy of the TTC report prepared by CEO Andy Byford for the TTC commission last week, and it comments on your plan to put the subway extension through Scarborough. I hope that you and your caucus have had an opportunity to review this report, because there are several things in here that would tell anybody that what you're

proposing is just not feasible or right. I'd like to quote some of the things from the plan, if I could.

Firstly, slower operation: Because of maximum curves and maximum grades, there are six speed-reduction zones where the train can only go 50 to 55 kilometres instead of 80. This increases overall trip and passenger time.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Question?

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** My question is, also, that there is \$300 million to \$400 million not accounted for in the funding.

I want to know when you're going to meet with the TTC and the Toronto mayor to move forward with the Toronto council plan.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** The engineers at both Metrolinx and the TTC talk and work together, week to week, on a regular basis. I think that Mr. Byford was very clear that this is technically feasible. There is a great deal of work being done on looking at the different options, and our report will be released.

You'll notice in that report that such basic things as ridership are absent and it is very early going. Also, a lot of the assumptions that the member opposite is making may not be entirely accurate.

What we do have is a real critical need to stick to the existing plan and to go where people are, which is where the Scarborough Town Centre is. We will continue to work with the city and the federal government now that there is an appearance of some funds there to complete the project.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** Last time, I asked if the government would please let us know when they planned to open their first subway station in Toronto. I'd like to read from Hansard, because it's an interesting answer they gave me. The minister said, "We will shortly, within the next few years, have a better record than the party opposite."

"The next few years" is very vague. It's not a fair answer for the opposition and it's certainly not a fair answer for the citizens of Toronto. I want to know when they are going to open their first subway station. The score is 64 to nothing. They've been in power for 10 years and it's about time they did something.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** We are about to open dozens of subway and LRT stations at an unprecedented rate across the GTHA. Here we go back to the basic problem: We have a \$50-billion, 15-project major move to deal with congestion. This is unprecedented. This means that people in Scarborough and Etobicoke and north Toronto won't be waiting 40 minutes for a bus. They'll get the high-speed, high-quality transit that they have waited for.

They didn't get it when the party opposite was in power. They didn't put a penny in. The party opposite still in power has hardly funded it. We're funding 90% of the Big Move costs; the federal government, 3.85%. Our friends at city hall appear like they're getting into the game for the first time. We welcome that, and we'll work



on them to accelerate not just one project but all 15 and solve a larger problem.

### COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** My question is to the Premier. John Duffy is a lobbyist with a strategy group that is registered to work on behalf of EllisDon. Mr. Duffy touts his close relationship with you on the StrategyCorp website, noting that he worked with you—

*Interruption.*

**Interjection:** Turn your phone off.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Jeez—noting that he worked on the Premier's leadership campaign last winter.

On April 19, he registered to lobby on behalf of EllisDon.

Has the Premier met with Mr. Duffy, and if so, did she discuss this bill?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** It's quite unbelievable that the New Democratic Party, which put together and helped draft a motion of this House which programmed the Financial Accountability Officer legislation, who voted for it, who voted for closure on it, are now upset because we're putting forward a similar programming motion dealing with eight bills and the establishment of a Select Committee on Developmental Services.

All the programming motion does is allow for debate and discussion in a programmed way as it would be put forward, in a way which will allow a smooth passage but will allow debate and discussion. There will be committee time on this bill that he's so concerned about. There will be time for amendments; there will be time for votes at all stages.

It's just a little bit passing strange that when it's the FAO, it's okay, but when it's a programming motion with these eight bills, suddenly their sensibilities are offended.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Back to the Premier, and hopefully I'll get an answer this time: The issue is that Mr. Duffy registered to lobby on April 19 and, within days, that particular bill was custom-made for his client and was introduced into this House. Within weeks, it sailed past a vote with the enthusiastic support of the Liberal caucus.

So I ask you again: Will the Premier—I repeat, will the Premier—tell us what meeting Mr. Duffy organized with you and with anybody else on your staff?

**Hon. John Milloy:** If my honourable friend has questions about the particular bill, perhaps he should be asking the member from Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, who brought forward this private member's bill.

This private member's bill came forward. It had debate and discussion at second reading, and a vote. All this programming motion does is ensure that it is addressed by a committee. There will be an opportunity again for debate, discussion, amendments and witnesses to come forward, and the honourable member can ask all the questions that he wants.

But as I say, if he has a question about who met with who, perhaps he should address it to the member for Lambton—Kent—Middlesex.

### TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** If you've been out of a job and you're worried about where your next rent is going to come from, often a temp agency can be a lifesaver. They allow you to pay the rent and put food on the table while you wait for that permanent job.

Another thing I've learned is that these temp agencies often provide something very valuable, that much-sought-after thing: Canadian work experience for new immigrants. So they really do provide a very important service.

However, at the same time, I do hear concerns from my constituents about employment standards and health and safety issues that are facing them in the workplace.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I can't believe you're supporting temp agencies.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Hamilton Mountain, come to order.

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** The fact is that the most vulnerable of our workers are the least likely to complain about these abuses, so it's important for somebody like me to stand up on their behalf and ask these questions.

My question to the minister is, what are you doing to ensure the rights of my constituents?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I really do want to thank the member for asking a very important question on an issue that I hear quite often about. I want the member to know that her constituents can rest assured that we are out there, as the Ministry of Labour, in workplaces across the province, ensuring that workers know their rights and that employers are living up to their responsibilities.

On the issue of temporary work agencies, I want to give special credit to the member from Brampton—Springdale and the member from Brampton West for being tremendous advocates on this issue. In fact, it was the member from Brampton West who brought in a private member's bill in terms of regulating temporary work agencies back in 2006.

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I'm very proud to say that our government, in 2009—the first provincial government in Canada—brought a specific law regulating temporary work agencies. Under the law, we've made sure that employees are not unfairly prevented from being hired directly by employers; agencies are prohibited from charging fees to workers for such things as resumé writing and interview preparation; and agencies are required to provide information to workers about their rights under the Employment Standards Act.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** Thank you to the minister for that great answer. It's really good to know that our government has put in place all of these rules and regulations to protect our workers.

However, I do have to say that a rule is only as good as its enforcement, so if the minister can tell me what his ministry is doing to make sure that these rules are being enforced.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you very much. Enforcement is a very important question. I want to give credit to my predecessor, the former Minister of Labour, the member from Brampton–Springdale, for actually initiating the first-ever blitz for proactive enforcement in the temporary work agencies. As a result, our inspectors visited about 100 temporary work agencies and laid over 200 work orders to ensure that the law that we brought in in 2009 is fully complied with.

Similarly, a few weeks ago I did a round table in Brampton, talking to constituents, along with the members from Brampton–Springdale and Brampton West, and assured them that we're doing everything in our power to inform constituents. In fact, we have information about temporary work agencies available in 23 different languages. I encourage all to go to [ontario.ca/labour](http://ontario.ca/labour) to get that information.

#### HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** My question is to the Premier and concerns the horse racing industry. That industry was devastated when, without warning, the Liberals pulled the plug out from under it. They then struck a panel of former politicians to clean up the mess it made, at a cost of over half a million dollars so far.

This weekend, we learned that Woodbine Entertainment paid out \$51 million in bonuses over 12 years. The Globe and Mail reports that the CEO is believed to have earned just over \$1 million last year.

Speaker, the Liberals have been in office for 10 long years. Premier, why have you failed so miserably when it comes to enforcing basic standards of accountability?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Rural Affairs.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Our government believes in a strong, sustainable future for the horse racing industry in Ontario. Our plan is guided by the work that's being done by the horse racing transition panel. The panel is led by three very honourable gentlemen: John Wilkinson, John Snobelen and Elmer Buchanan. Premier Wynne has asked the panel to develop a comprehensive five-year plan.

Our government will continue to work with Ontario's great horse racing community to ensure that racing remains vibrant in the years to come. I do have a quote from John Snobelen: "SARP needed to end. Hundreds of millions in slot dollars had the perverse effect of turning the industry away from its fans and customers."

There is no doubt: "that is no longer in doubt"—John Snobelen, a member of the horse racing transition panel.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** The issues at Woodbine took place right under this government's nose. Horse breeders themselves were raising questions which the Liberals ignored. Obviously, they have no capacity for effective

oversight. It's so much easier for them to just look the other way.

But the horse racing industry is much bigger than one racetrack. Instead of dealing with the issues at Woodbine, the Liberals targeted an entire industry—talk about throwing the baby out with the bathwater. They deliberately jeopardized 60,000 jobs, mainly in rural Ontario. Some 9,000 of those jobs are already gone.

My question is this: Why should 60,000 people have to pay the price for this government's own breakdown of accountability?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'll wait. Minister?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Well, Mr. Speaker, as John Snobelen said, there was a lack of transparency in the SARP program—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Dufferin, come to order.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** —and he has many members on the side opposite. The lack of transparency and accountability in this PC-initiated Slots at Racetracks Program is exactly—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The members from Northumberland, Simcoe North, Leeds–Grenville and Durham, come to order.

**Interjection:** I didn't hear him say anything.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Oh, I did, and so did the member from—I want the member from Prince Edward–Hastings to relax.

Finish your answer, please.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Mr. Speaker, I'm quite shocked today that a former cabinet minister, Mr. Snobelen—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Look, I'm not fooling around, here. That goes for everyone.

Answer, please.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I want to reiterate what Mr. Snobelen said again—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Wrap up.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** "SARP needed to end. Hundreds of millions in slot dollars had the perverse effect of turning the industry away from its fans and customers." One question, he says, "is no longer in doubt: Horse racing is here to stay in Ontario."

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** When I stand, you sit. New question.

#### COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** My question is to the Premier. In the past, the government—



*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Yes, and so does the member from Renfrew know the rules. When I ask for quiet, I should get it.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Mr. Speaker, in the past, the government has made it clear that they don't legislate or even comment on issues that are still before the courts. Given that the issues between EllisDon and their employees are still before the courts, why is this government changing the rules?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know the Minister of Labour will want to comment on the supplementary. I want to be clear that the Divisional Court rendered a decision. We are reviewing that decision. I think the Minister of Labour made it very clear that, as we understand it, the status quo can pertain vis-à-vis EllisDon. There is a 15-day period, I believe, where there may be an appeal, but the Divisional Court has rendered a decision.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** My question is, again, to the Premier: What we know is that the government is still trying to figure out the impact of this decision. For 10 long years, we've heard the courts used as an excuse by this government. Whether it's the parents of children with autism fighting for IBI treatment or part-time college instructors looking for rights on the job, the Liberal government has hidden behind the phrase, "It's before the courts." But when EllisDon is fighting for a matter before the courts, the Liberals scramble to change the laws. Why?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** First of all, let's just state the fact again that this is a private member's bill that we're dealing with; this is not a government bill—number one.

Number two: As I mentioned earlier and as the Premier restated, late Friday afternoon we received a decision from the Divisional Court to the decision of the Ontario Labour Relations Board. The decision is by three justices who have reviewed the decision of the Ontario Labour Relations Board. After thorough analysis, they have quashed the decision that was made by the Ontario Labour Relations Board. In fact, they applied the principle of estoppel and made the estoppel permanent. The decision came late Friday. We are, of course, very closely reviewing the decision at the moment. I encourage the members opposite to read the decision as well.

## RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** Speaker, my question, through you, is to the Minister of Rural Affairs. Ontario's small and rural communities have many unique and diverse challenges when it comes to infrastructure. Ensuring roads, bridges and other critical infrastructure are maintained and upgraded requires significant investment, which many municipalities find costly.

According to a recent city of Ottawa survey titled Building a Liveable Ottawa: Focus on Rural Issues, fix-

ing and improving rural roads was identified as the main priority for residents. My constituents and residents across Ontario want to know how their government is supporting municipalities with these critical investments.

Speaker, through you to the Minister of Rural Affairs, could the minister please update the House on what our government is doing to help rural municipalities fund infrastructure projects?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I want to thank the member from Ottawa-Orléans for his question. Investing in local infrastructure is critical for rural municipalities and one of our government's main priorities. In the 2013 budget we announced a new \$100-million fund for infrastructure in small, rural and northern communities.

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Over the summer, my colleague Minister Murray and I criss-crossed Ontario, hosting 10 consultations to discuss the fund's scope and size. We heard from over 500 municipal representatives and logged nearly 50 hours of consultation. This is in addition to the nearly \$90 million in investments under the MIII program announced this summer. These investments will help rural municipalities build roads, bridges and other critical infrastructure to keep our communities moving forward.

We'll have more to say on this in the coming days.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** Thanks to the minister for that answer. My constituents will be pleased to hear that our government is committed to investing in infrastructure.

One of the main concerns I've heard has been a desire for a permanent, stable source of funding. As a consulting engineer, I've worked for many of these municipalities. They have prepared detailed asset management plans but now need the predictable funding associated with a permanent fund so they can better plan. Bringing in this stability will allow small and rural municipalities to properly build and maintain key roads and bridges for years to come.

Speaker, through you to the Minister of Rural Affairs: Could the minister please update the House on what our government is doing to ensure municipalities have stable, predictable funding for infrastructure?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I want to thank, again, the excellent member from Ottawa-Orléans for his supplementary.

We know that one of the main priorities in rural Ontario is predictable, stable funding. Premier Wynne stated her intention to make infrastructure funding permanent. We're looking to the advice we received over the summer as we build on what the permanent infrastructure fund could look like. Our government is working with rural communities, providing the support they deserve.

But don't take my word here. Here's what a very fine mayor from Orillia, Mayor Angelo Orsi, had to say: "I applaud the Wynne government for reaching out to rural municipalities to understand their concerns with respect to infrastructure funding."

Mr. Speaker, I'm confident that by working together, we can continue to strengthen rural communities through key investments in infrastructure.

## ONTARIO NORTHLAND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** My question is for the Premier. On page 96 of your 2012 budget, it lists a savings of \$265 million for the sale of Ontario Northland. But in confidential advice to cabinet, there was a document entitled *Fiscal Implications at Variance from the 2012 Budget*. It states that you won't indeed save the \$265 million that was budgeted; instead, it will cost you \$790 million for this fire sale. Premier, that spread leaves a billion-dollar hole in your budget. According to the documents, you knew this when your 2013 budget was presented. So I'm asking you a simple question: When are you going to come clean with the taxpayers of Ontario about the billion-dollar hole in the Liberal budget?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I'm glad to have an opportunity to address this issue, particularly because I think the member from Nipissing's approach has been alarmist and not at all helpful and, by the way, not even remotely accurate in terms of how we are approaching the opportunity we have to transform the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission.

Certainly, when we're looking at options for the ONTC, I think it's fair to say the government has a responsibility and a duty to assess all associated liabilities. I think that would be described as a prudent part of responsible governance.

The numbers that the member from Nipissing has been sharing would see absolutely no job retention, no considerations about the socio-economic considerations for the future of the thing. This is, quite frankly, an alarmist depiction that doesn't in any way reflect the approach that we are taking towards the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission.

We recognize that the status quo is not going to work. We have a minister's advisory committee that has been set up to work to make those decisions, and we're—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Let me tell you what is alarming. What's alarming is that the treasury told your government to defer the fire sale announcement and wait for "further due diligence and analysis of fiscal implications."

Speaker, those new numbers did come and, yes, they are alarming; I'll give him that. Instead of the \$25 million that the Liberals listed for severance, it's now listed at \$250 million, and I say to you right here and now, that's still low by half.

Also, they had absolutely no retirement benefits listed. They were not going to pay any benefits to any retirees. I stood and fought for those retirees, and now it's listed in the new documents as \$56 million.

They showed pensions at only \$100 million, when it's \$200 million; in fact, it's \$212 million.

Do I need to go on and show why I'm so alarmed at this \$790 million? When are you going to—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please.

Minister?

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** What the member is talking about is an assessment of all the associated liabilities if we absolutely shut the system down, something that was never the approach that we were going to take. Certainly, we're very, very keen to make sure that we have a positive way to work our way through the challenges of the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission. We are committed to a sustainable, efficient system, and we think there are some great opportunities for the ONTC.

Again, the picture that the member for Nipissing has brought forward is not even a remotely accurate representation of the approach we were taking, and certainly not the approach we are taking now. We are working through a ministerial advisory committee. Again, I've asked the member on a number of occasions to work with us, to provide a co-operative approach. This approach is one that is not helpful to the ONTC employees, not helpful to the municipalities that care so much.

I say on behalf of the ministerial advisory committee, I say on behalf of Mayor Al McDonald of North Bay and Mayor Spacek, the president of FONOM, and others, work with us to try to come up with a positive way—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

## COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** My question is for the Premier. The government now has a decision that makes it clear that the EllisDon bill is not an urgent matter, even for the well-connected company that asked for it. Whatever excuse the Premier had for rushing the bill ahead is falling apart. Will she clear things up today and stop pressing ahead with moves to ram it through?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, let's review what's happening again. The member for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex has put forward a private member's bill. It has been debated here in the Legislature. It is part of a larger programming motion, the same type of motion that the member's party pushed for for the Financial Accountability Officer legislation. There will be an opportunity, if this programming motion passes, for the bill to go to committee, where the issues that she has raised and her colleagues have raised can be discussed, where there can be witnesses, where there can be amendments and, ultimately, a vote on all aspects of the bill. Then it will come back here, where there will be more discussion and votes. Mr. Speaker, this is a private member's bill, and it will be looked at thoroughly by the committee.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.



**Ms. Catherine Fife:** The government can't have it both ways. If this bill isn't an urgent matter, if it's before the courts, why won't she clear things up today and make it clear that she won't proceed with this undemocratic legislation?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, the honourable member can't have it both ways. All of a sudden, programming motions are horrible, unless the NDP proposes the programming motion. We have put together a set of eight bills on which there is some consensus within the Legislature. One of them is a private member's bill for the member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. There are other bills, too, as well as the formation of a special committee to look at developmental services.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We can't have the debate going on between the members who are asking the question and the members who are answering. Thank you.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, I think it is very important to stress that all this programming motion does is allow for further debate and discussion and votes on all these matters. Any issues that the honourable member, or any honourable member in this Legislature, has can be raised if and when it goes before committee.

#### YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

**Ms. Soo Wong:** My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Our government has made it a priority to invest in youth throughout the province. In my riding of Scarborough-Agincourt, there are many creative and talented youth who would like to make a difference in their community. The minister recently announced an exciting partnership with MaRS. This is to create Studio Y, Ontario's social impact and leadership academy. Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister, can she please inform the House how this partnership gives youth the opportunity to make a positive impact in their community? Also, how does this program work?

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** Thank you to the member for the question. I'm pleased to be able to stand to speak a bit about Studio Y, which we just announced last week. I agree with the member that there are many youth, not just in her riding but all across the province, who are talented, well-educated, with a strong desire to make a positive impact in their communities. Our government wants to identify and refine that talent so their great ideas can become reality.

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I am proud to say that we are supporting MaRS with launching Studio Y, Ontario's impact and leadership activity, designed to educate young leaders in social innovation and really help them grow their great ideas. Every year, 25 youth aged 18 to 29 from across the province—not just from Toronto, but across the province—will be selected by MaRS to take place in this nine-month program. They will receive intensive training and

mentoring. This really is an investment in our future and in our—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to hear that we are supporting social innovation throughout this province. Ontario youth are recognized as some of the best educated in the world—our page Daniel goes to Kennedy Public School, in my riding of Scarborough-Agincourt, which is recognized as the number one elementary school in the system. That's another great thing I wanted to promote: They are talented, global minded and passionate about making a difference.

Investing in leadership skills will help these young people become social entrepreneurs, change agents and civic leaders of tomorrow. Creating a highly skilled workforce is important to every Ontarian in this competing era of globalization. I'm pleased to see that we are partnering with MaRS, as they have a proven track record of driving social innovation and economic prosperity.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister, how does Studio Y strengthen Ontario's social innovation culture?

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** I agree; we do have a fantastic education system here and, again, talent and creativity across the province. The curriculum in Studio Y will help build on that education and that strength to help youth turn their business ideas into reality.

There are three essential components to this intensive nine-month program. The first three months, youth will learn about governance, business planning, negotiating and communication skills; the next four months will help them use those skills in real-life situations, working with enterprises or other organizations in their communities. Then there will be a team project in the last two months. It's certainly an exciting initiative, and one that I wish was around when I was younger.

Applications for Studio Y, just so everyone knows, open tomorrow, online at [studio.marsdd.com](http://studio.marsdd.com). The first group of young people will begin in January, and I can't wait to see the creativity and the environment that is created through this project.

#### HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** My question is for the Minister of Transportation. As you're well aware, there is an ongoing study on the 401 expansion going through the region of Durham. The difficulty that it has caused is that it has shut down all development in the area until such time as the study is completed.

Now the problem is complicated such that, Minister, your senior ministerial individuals have come to city council and explained to city council that there will be no expansion through the area until the year 2030 or 2031. The difficulty is that I have developers in the area who are waiting to build—and have permits waiting to go—until they get the okay from the Ministry of Transportation.

Minister, what's happening with these permits and the expansion in the area?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** First, to give some context to this, we not only have one of the biggest transit builds that we're spending more on highway expansion than ever before; our annual highway budget is now an unprecedented \$2.6 billion.

I also want to compliment the federal government. You know I've been critical of them when they're not a partner. Certainly on the 407, the federal government has been a good partner on that project, and we're trying to advance that project.

I realize that the highway and transportation right-of-ways do cause problems for development. I'm not particularly familiar with the details. I accept that there is some validity to the concern that you are raising. I will happily meet with you and with the municipalities to try to resolve it, and I greatly appreciate you raising the issue.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The leader of the third party, on a point of order.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I move unanimous consent that the provisions of government order 8 relating to Bill 74 be deleted.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The leader of the third party is seeking unanimous consent to delete a portion of the programming motion. Do we agree? I heard a no.

## VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** A point of order from the member from Mississauga—Streetsville.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I am pleased to introduce, in the west members' gallery, Bernard Jordaan and his wife, who are from Meadowvale. He's the president of the Meadowvale senior citizens' club, and he is here for senior citizens' day. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The minister responsible for seniors, on a point of order.

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** Speaker, in the audience, we also have a constituent of mine from York West, Omalola Are. Welcome.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There are no deferred votes, so this House stands recessed until 1 p.m.

*The House recessed from 1145 to 1300.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I would like to introduce a few guests of mine: Mrs. Maria DasKalos and her nephew, Nicholas Theolis, as well as Mary Gavel, who are here to support the Ombudsman oversight bill. Thank you.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** In the west lobby gallery, I'd like to introduce my executive assistant, John Spink, who's on his last day of work. He's actually retiring, and I want to thank him for his years of service to the Legislature

and wish him many happy days of retirement. Thank you—if you could all join with me.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Happy retirement.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### SENIOR CITIZENS

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** Today is seniors' day at Queen's Park. Tomorrow is international seniors' day and, therefore, an appropriate time to recognize the valuable contributions seniors make to our communities across the province.

As the critic for seniors and retirement security, I've had the opportunity to look extensively at the issues which our seniors face on a daily basis. Increasing life-style costs, such as the high price we pay for energy, the growing number of fees and the burden of drugs all threaten the financial stability of our seniors. As we see more and more people retiring, it is critical that we develop a system that encourages seniors to stay in their homes, instead of driving them out.

These are the people who have contributed in so many ways to our society. They are our parents, grandparents, neighbours, friends and mentors. We need to ensure that seniors can continue to live with dignity and feel safe, as we move forward as a province.

I hope that everyone was able to attend the lunch reception that was held today by the Ontario Gerontology Association, to learn more about some of the issues our seniors face.

### GIRL POWER PROJECT

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** This past Saturday, I had the pleasure of joining members of the London community for a tree-planting initiative along the Veterans Memorial Parkway in London—Fanshawe. The tree plant this weekend marked the inaugural community service venture of a newly established organization called Girl Power.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce this commendable project to the members of the Legislature. The Girl Power project is a mentorship initiative that unites the 27th Girl Guides and London's Women in Rotary. This unique partnership provides a multitude of benefits to the women and girls involved.

The Women in Rotary provide the Girl Guides with positive female role models, encouraging them to establish community service as a lifelong habit, and provide an example of strong female community leadership.

Through their participation in the Girl Power project, the Girl Guides are given the opportunity to explore their own potential as young trailblazers and observe the community contributions of their Rotarian counterparts.

Mentorship of this kind lays the groundwork for a strong sense of social citizenship and responsibility and, most importantly, self-confidence, the crucial ingredients



for young women wanting to establish themselves as leaders in their communities.

I would like to congratulate the 27th Girl Guides and the Women in Rotary and everyone involved in the Girl Power project for establishing such a pioneering and dynamic partnership.

#### ERINOAKKIDS CENTRE FOR TREATMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** In 2007, when ErinoakKids unveiled its new name, I pledged to do everything I could to help Ontario's largest children's treatment centre, and the 14,000 or so families it serves at any given time, to get a new home in Mississauga.

From its inception in Erin Mills in 1977, ErinoakKids now serves more families of children with developmental difficulties and autism than any other children's treatment centre in Ontario. But ErinoakKids had grown into 10 awkwardly located rented facilities and couldn't provide the care that kids and their families needed.

Our Peel and Halton MPPs worked with our Ministry of Children and Youth Services, and in the past few weeks have announced that ErinoakKids will soon operate out of three state-of-the-art facilities, one each serving Brampton, Mississauga and Oakville.

The new Mississauga location for ErinoakKids will be across from the Erindale GO Station, near the corner of Burnhamthorpe Road and Central Parkway. ErinoakKids will shortly put the project to tender.

With a projected 2016 occupancy date for its new headquarters and Mississauga children's treatment centre, the ErinoakKids development in Brampton, Mississauga and Oakville is a promise made and a promise kept.

#### POLICE

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Mr. Speaker, last Thursday morning, MPP Laurie Scott and I were at the police memorial outside, at the kickoff of the 460-kilometre run. It's the ninth annual memorial peace officers' run between Toronto and Ottawa. Over 250 participants took part in that particular run. It was beautiful weather; they had a beautiful weekend for it. The whole intent, of course, is to draw awareness to the great work our police officers do and to pay tribute to those who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

I thought it was very special that the mother of Jennifer Kovach, a Guelph officer who lost her life earlier in the year, ran in the race. As well, I thought it was really special that the commissioner of the OPP, although he couldn't run the whole 460 kilometres, did run 10 kilometres: five kilometres at the beginning and five at the end. It was special that we had this many people pay tribute to our fallen officers at this time.

Of course, it all ended on Sunday at the Canadian national police memorial in Ottawa, where we paid tribute to those police officers and peace officers from across our nation who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

#### DOCKS AT MOOSONEE

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Mr. Speaker, earlier this summer we had a unique situation in Moosonee, Moose Factory, where the docks that are normally used to offload people from the water taxis on the Moosonee side of the river had not been installed. I just want to take this opportunity in the House to thank a few people for having resolved that issue, and one of them happens to be sitting across the way from me, Minister Gravelle. We were able to work together in trying to find not only a solution for the summer, but hopefully I think we found a solution that will bring us into next year and the years to come. It wasn't easy. It meant that a lot of people had to roll up their sleeves and try to find a way to resolve this particular issue.

I also want to thank the town of Moosonee for their bit and really want to thank Chief Hardisty and the Moose Cree First Nation for having stepped forward to agree to put in the docks this year. We're hoping to get similar agreements in the future, but we'll see where that goes.

I just want to take this opportunity to say it's one of those cases where something had to be done. As the local member and those people within the community affected, we approached the minister and, together, we tried to find a solution. It may not be exactly what people would want, but, I've got to tell you, at least now when you get off the docks at Moosonee, you don't have to step into the water.

I know the Clerk is interested in this, because she has walked off those docks with me before, and I'm sure she would not appreciate getting her black cloak all dirty when she walks off the boat. I just wanted to make sure the Clerk knows that we have your interests at heart.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Does that have something to do with a long walk off a short pier?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** No, that's tomorrow—

#### GIVE THE GIFT OF LIFE WALK

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Members' statements. The member from Oakville.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** It's tough to follow up on that one, Speaker, but thank you.

On September 21, I had the opportunity to join 120 of my constituents at Bronte Creek Provincial Park for the Give the Gift of Life Walk for the Kidney Foundation of Canada. This year, the walk surpassed its goal and raised over \$36,000 to help provide kidney patients and their families with education and emotional support.

The walk in Oakville was first organized by Ron Newman in 2011. Ron is very thankful for all the support that he and his family have received from the Kidney Foundation during his—and get this, Speaker—76 surgeries. The foundation also supported him during his 10 years of dialysis before he finally had a kidney transplant.

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He's always emphasizing the importance of exercise during recovery. He cites regular exercise during dialysis

for helping him come through his surgeries with flying colours.

He's also involved with a local advocacy group called Be A Donor Oakville. They raise awareness about the importance of organ donation.

Today I'd like to thank Ron Newman for all the work he has done to bring the Give the Gift of Life Walk to Oakville and congratulate him and the Kidney Foundation on another very successful event to help our community understand exactly what challenges some people in our society are facing on a daily basis.

### WASTE MANAGEMENT

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** The Carp landfill is in my riding of Carleton—Mississippi Mills, and it is full. A plan to build a new landfill beside the old landfill has caused much discussion on the pros and cons of landfills in general and the Carp landfill in particular. It is a contentious issue. Nobody wants a landfill in their backyard.

As a result, six concerned people in my riding formed a committee to research, discuss and write a report with a conceptual plan on how to best manage the disposal of waste in the province of Ontario. In the report, the committee recommends that Ontario reduce, reuse, recycle and recover. This includes composting, recycling and incineration. Incineration produces energy that can be used. Composting and recycling would be done by the private sector without government subsidies. The profit would come from the marketplace. Materials that are not composted or recycled would be incinerated.

The report also identifies that residential and ICI waste should be combined into one class of waste and that the management of all waste should fall under municipal jurisdiction. That way, municipalities would have the freedom to choose landfill or incineration. This would simplify the management of waste.

### ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

**Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield:** It's my pleasure to be able to stand up and say that I had the opportunity to participate in the Alzheimer's gala last Thursday for the Toronto chapter, where the money they raised went towards Alzheimer's research. During that particular evening we had a lot of discussion about some new therapy that was occurring: the therapy of music. There's a new documentary called *Alive Inside*, where music actually awakens a person who is sleeping with this incredible disease and gives them back some life and really proves to all of us that there is life inside someone with Alzheimer's.

One of the reasons why this is particularly important is that currently in this province, if you look at the number of seniors over the age of 65 to 84, 61,655 of them are prescribed antipsychotic drugs used to control behaviour, which I call a constraint. In fact, the question remains: Is this required? Antipsychotics were not originally designed for people with Alzheimer's; they were designed for psychosis.

The question really is: Do all of these people who are taking these drugs require them, or are there other methods such as music therapy—or art therapy, which is another approach? I think that we need to change our thinking and remember that just because someone has Alzheimer's—as someone said to me recently, “I'm not dead yet. I'm alive. I'm alive inside. I deserve to be treated with respect and dignity as I age. Please don't drug me to death.”

### CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Last week I had the opportunity and the pleasure of meeting with a number of different representatives from the Barrie Construction Association. They were here with the COCA reps to lobby all of us, talking about their concerns in their local ridings.

The hard-working people of the Barrie Construction Association have an issue with Bill 69, the Prompt Payment Act for the construction industry—not with it, but for it, in fact. Their concern is that this bill may not see the light of day, and it is something that is critically important to them. Having been a small business person myself, I know how critical prompt payment is. To go months and months, and, in some cases, to not get paid, means it's money out of their pockets. It means, in many cases, that they can't continue their business if they're not paid promptly. It means apprenticeship growth, job creation, and it means that small and medium-sized businesses can invest in new equipment so they can grow. Most importantly, prompt payment means fairness for the hard-working Ontarians who make up the industry, which is a primary driver of Ontario's economy.

Although we all support this bill in the Legislature, we need the government to call the bill for third reading. This is of critical importance to our economy. So I'm here today to represent the hard-working Barrie Construction Association worker members, and speak, in a way, for the 400,000 members of COCA and ask the government to call their bill for third reading so that we can make prompt payment a reality in our economy in the province of Ontario today.

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

OMBUDSMAN AMENDMENT ACT  
(INVESTIGATION OF HEALTH CARE  
SERVICES), 2013

LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT  
LA LOI SUR L'OMBUDSMAN  
(ENQUÊTES SUR LES SERVICES  
DE SOINS DE SANTÉ)

Mme Gélinas moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 109, An Act to amend the Ombudsman Act with respect to investigating specified health care services /  
Projet de loi 109, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'ombudsman



en ce qui a trait aux enquêtes sur des services de soins de santé précisés.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** For the fourth time, I am introducing a bill that will amend the Ombudsman Act to give the Ombudsman oversight of our health care system. That would include homes for special care; long-term-care homes; community care access centres; hospitals, whether they be public or private; ambulance services; air ambulance services; health units; as well as retirement homes.

Ontario is the only province in Canada where the Ombudsman does not have oversight of health care, and it is time for Ontario to follow suit.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING WEEK

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I rise today to mark September 30 to October 6 as Community Health and Wellbeing Week in the province of Ontario. This year's theme is, "Community Health and Wellbeing: Shift the Conversation."

Before I go on, I would like to acknowledge some guests we have in the House today. I'd like to welcome staff from the Association of Ontario Health Centres, the Access Alliance health centre and the Four Villages Community Health Centre. I want to say thank you for being here, but I want to say, especially, thank you for the work you do every day.

Keeping Ontarians healthy is one of the key pillars—the first pillar—of our Action Plan for Health Care. We are putting a strong focus on health promotion and prevention of illness, because I think the people of Ontario want better health, not more health care.

Speaker, during this week, providers are focusing on broadening the health care conversation, concentrating on the root causes of poor health. In particular, this week we reflect on our collective responsibility to keep Ontarians healthy so that they don't end up in our hospital emergency rooms.

I'd like to give a special mention to Ontario's community health centres, our aboriginal health access centres, our nurse-practitioner-led clinics and our family health teams, who are crucial partners in helping us move this important conversation forward.

This week, our partners are participating in a variety of activities in communities right across this great province in conjunction with our LHINs and social service agencies, focusing on the social determinants of

health—things like poverty, nutrition, access to education—which have a very real impact on health.

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As a former Minister of Children and Youth Services and a member of this government for the past 10 years, I must say I'm very proud of the work we're doing to address these very real issues. Launched in 2008, our poverty reduction strategy is focusing on lifting tens of thousands of children and their families out of poverty. We introduced the Ontario Child Benefit, which is helping upwards of a million children and their families.

Our investments in affordable housing have surpassed the previous two governments combined, and we continue to build and renovate more units across the province each and every day. We introduced a rent bank program, helping low-income tenants avoid eviction in the event of a missed payment, and we've increased supports through the Ontario Drug Benefit, ODSP, OW and other social services.

We've nearly doubled the number of community health centres. We've put in place 25 nurse-practitioner-led clinics. We've added 200 family health teams, serving almost three million Ontarians.

This government and this Premier believe in giving Ontarians the tools to succeed and to live a healthy life. We believe in a fair Ontario for all.

Speaker, there is more to do, and this government is doing more. In fact, this morning, along with my colleague the Minister of Children and Youth Services, we announced the first of several initiatives focused on keeping our children and families healthy, starting with our youngest Ontarians.

Babies get the healthiest start in life when their moms are able to breastfeed. That's why we're making sure that every mom in Ontario who wants to breastfeed has the supports to do so. First, we're going to expand access to breastfeeding telephone support services so they're available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Second, we're supporting Ontario's hospital and community health providers to achieve the World Health Organization's baby-friendly initiative designation so they can better support new moms in breastfeeding. Third, we're helping moms in population groups that have lower rates of breastfeeding with targeted supports, and we're developing new resources to support breastfeeding.

Health and well-being begin in our homes, our schools and our communities, where access to education, employment, housing, nutritious foods and social supports all play a significant role in keeping people healthy and out of hospital. We know the important work our community health centres and our aboriginal health access centres do every day to help segments of the population that are faced with additional challenges. We applaud their work. We also know that in order to reach more people, we need to ensure that our partners have the tools they need at their disposal, which is why this past April, I was very pleased to announce increased funding to renovate and expand 15 community health centres and aboriginal health access centres across the province.

Speaker, I would once again like to applaud all our community health service delivery agents for being so actively involved in this conversation. Together we can shift the conversation; together we can keep Ontarians healthy. As Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, I salute their work. I'm happy to join in celebrating new approaches that achieve the best possible health and well-being for everyone in our province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Statements by ministries? Last call for statements by ministries.

It is now time for responses.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** During Community Health and Wellbeing Week—where is page 1? My apologies, Mr. Speaker. I was mesmerized by the minister's speech. It kind of threw me off a little bit.

Speaker, I am pleased to rise today on behalf of Tim Hudak, Christine Elliott, our health care critic, and the Ontario PC caucus in recognition of Community Health and Wellbeing Week. All this week, between September 30 and October 6, some 108 community-governed primary health care organizations are hosting special events across the province around the theme "Community Health and Wellbeing—Shift the Conversation."

Through these community-based health promotion initiatives, the group's aim is to engage everyone in a new dialogue about their health, and move beyond the traditional health system of diagnosing and treating disease. This is one of the major challenges of the coming years: to improve our understanding of the root causes of well-being versus ill-being.

Primary health organizations participating in Community Health and Wellbeing Week include Ontario's community health centres, CHCs, aboriginal health access centres, community-governed family health teams and nurse-practitioner-led clinics.

As things now stand, far too many Ontarians experience preventable illnesses because our fragmented health care system remains poorly prepared to address the most important determinants of good health: access to good nutrition, housing, social supports, employment, income and education. The province, local health integration networks and all the different parts of the health and social service sector need to do a better job of responding to these social determinants of health.

Experts agree that these problems can be addressed and financial burdens on the acute care system eased by shifting from a downstream emphasis on treating illness to an upstream approach that prevents illnesses before they take hold. This was confirmed by the Canadian Index of Wellbeing in its second annual report and composite index on the well-being of Canadians, released last fall.

Fortunately, I believe the potential for this shift is quickly emerging, as this is the approach that's applied at Ontario's community health centres and other community-governed primary health care models throughout the province. An excellent example of one is the South East Grey Community Health Centre, which serves my constituents in Markdale and area. With a strong primary care team that includes doctors, nurse practitioners, regis-

tered nurses, social workers, a physiotherapist, a registered dietitian, a chiropodist, a health promoter and a community developer, it is a role model of community care. I would also note that the board chair, Terry Mokry, and the executive director, Allan Madden, have demonstrated great leadership, and we're proud of the results they have achieved. Most importantly, the services that they and other groups deliver to patients are helping to ease the burden on other health care facilities, namely the Markdale Hospital, which hasn't been rebuilt as promised by the minister.

The CHC's collaborative approach promotes the best possible health and well-being outcomes for everyone. This is the approach that we are celebrating during the Community Health and Wellbeing Week.

Today, we are very blessed to have many of the professionals who work in our community health centres joining us in the Legislature, including staff from the Association of Ontario Health Centres and Access Alliance health centre. They're all here today to help celebrate community health week. I myself have had the honour to meet with some of these great professionals and their teams and learn about the valuable and excellent care they provide to more than 400,000 Ontarians across over 108 centres and satellites throughout the province, serving seniors, people with disabilities, youth, francophones, aboriginal Ontarians, low-income individuals and families and immigrants, as well as underserved rural populations, including my riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

I would also like to note that community health centres came into being 40 years ago under the leadership of Bill Davis, who was first to set them up as pilot projects in Ontario. In 1982, Tory health minister Larry Grossman announced that community health centres would make the leap and become part of Ontario's mainstream health system.

Today, as you heard, they work in teams of physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, counsellors, community workers, dietitians, dentists, chiropodists etc., to deliver primary health services and social services to individuals, families and communities: a one-stop-shop focused on patients' well-being.

Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to stand here and thank those people who drive our health care service in the community health centres. In my riding, it has certainly been a boon. They've been able to take stress from the emergency departments, which is our most costly form of health care. The model in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound certainly is a model that I believe serves us all well, and it's certainly a privilege to work alongside with them in my role as deputy health critic. We need to ensure that these continue; we need to ensure that primary care is always the focus, and we go through rural and northern Ontario to the best of our capability.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It is my pleasure to rise today to recognize Community Health and Wellbeing Week in Ontario. As many of you already know, I come from the community health centre movement. I was the executive



director of Le Centre de santé communautaire du Grand Sudbury—the Sudbury community health centre—before I came here.

We know that the Association of Ontario Health Centres will celebrate with all 108 community-governed primary health care organizations across the province by holding special events to mark the week and by calling for a shift in the conversation to community health and well-being. Therefore, the theme for this year is a shift in conversation.

The NDP is a strong supporter of that shift in conversation on health care in Ontario, to focus on what we call the upstream approach; that is, to prevent illness and to promote good health. Our party helped bring in medicare in Ontario 50 years ago, but now it is time to put in place what Tommy Douglas used to call “the second part of medicare”; that is, the conversations about keeping people healthy.

According to the most recent report of the Canadian Index of Wellbeing, Canadians are living longer but they are not living better. After the 2008 recession, Canadian well-being levels decreased by 24%, and they have not fully recovered. Diabetes rates are on the rise—a 53.1% increase in diabetes in the last 17 years. The likelihood of depression is also steadily growing. Canadians’ rating of their own health status has declined, especially for teenagers.

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We have health care disparities, with low-income people that are at higher risk of poor health and more likely to have diabetes or any other chronic condition. We all need to recognize that the biggest barrier to good health sits actually outside of the health care system; it is poverty. An upstream approach to health and well-being has to bring effective poverty-reduction strategies, with investment in the social determinants of health, to ensure secure and livable income, safe housing, accessible education, training programs etc.

An upstream approach to promote health and well-being includes investing in community health care centres, aboriginal health access centres, community-led, nurse-practitioner-led clinics, as well as community family health teams.

So we join with primary care organizations participating in community health and well-being to celebrate Ontario’s first Community Health and Wellbeing Week. It is quite something that for the first time—I have been here for six years—we are going to be celebrating community health and well-being. I dream of the day where our efforts will bring us to a year of celebration of community health and well-being, and I think I dream even bigger of the day where we will see a generation growing in health and well-being.

This is what drives me to come here even on days when my plane is fogged in and I’m having a hell of a tough day.

Ça me fait extrêmement plaisir de me lever aujourd’hui pour célébrer la Semaine de la santé et du bien-être communautaire, que l’on célébrera aujourd’hui,

le 30 septembre, jusqu’au 6 octobre. C’est l’association des centres de santé communautaire de la province qui a mis cette idée de l’avant, et c’est une idée que le parti néo-démocrate appuie depuis longtemps.

Mettre l’accent sur la promotion de la santé, sur les déterminants de la santé et sur la prévention de la maladie, c’est ce que notre ancêtre, M. Tommy Douglas, appelait la deuxième phase du système de santé. La première phase était de s’assurer que les gens avaient accès aux services de santé, peu importe leur portefeuille. La deuxième phase, c’est de s’assurer qu’on les garde en santé.

Aujourd’hui, le lancement de cette semaine—la première en Ontario—nous fait faire un pas de plus vers cet objectif. J’espère que bientôt on pourra voir toute une année de santé et de bien-être. Peut-être, j’espère, qu’on verra bientôt une génération complète en santé et en bien-être.

## PETITIONS

### CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE

**Mr. Frank Klees:** This petition deals with a very important health care issue in York region. Addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, it reads as follows:

“Whereas more than 850,000 Ontarians live with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or COPD (more than 70,000 in Central LHIN) and these numbers are climbing quickly; and

“Whereas COPD is one of the most costly chronic diseases in Ontario, currently responsible for 24% of emergency department visits and 24% of hospitalizations in this province; and

“Whereas respiratory rehabilitation is a Health Quality Ontario endorsed, evidence-based intervention that improves quality of life for people with COPD and other lung diseases while saving health care dollars; and

“Whereas due to lack of dedicated funding for lung health programs the respiratory rehabilitation program at Southlake Regional Health Centre—the only such program in Central LHIN—was recently cancelled;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to request the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to urge Central LHIN—and all LHINs—to develop evidence-based plans to address COPD and other lung diseases that coordinate resources and care across all levels of the health care system; and further

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to request the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to immediately work with stakeholders to develop a province-wide action plan for lung health to improve prevention, early diagnosis and patient outcomes, while maximizing the return on health care investment.”

Speaker, I'm pleased to affix my signature to this petition, and I trust that the Minister of Health will in fact work with us to address this issue.

### AIR-RAIL LINK

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** It's a pleasure to read yet some other people—I think everybody in my constituency has signed this petition.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas diesel trains are a health hazard for people who live near them;

"Whereas more toxic fumes will be created by up to 400 daily trains than the car trips they are meant to replace;

"Whereas the planned air-rail link does not serve the communities through which it passes and will be priced beyond the reach of most commuters;

"Whereas all major cities in the world with train service between their downtown core and the airport use electric trains;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the province of Ontario stop building the air-rail link for diesel and move to electrify the route immediately;

"That the air-rail link be designed, operated and priced as an affordable transportation option between all points along its route."

I couldn't agree more. I'm going to sign this, and I'm going to give it to Bridget to deliver to the table.

### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Donna Thomson and Lynda Amtng are here today, and collected the signatures on this petition.

"Whereas we are distressed by the lack of regulated equalized treatment of special-needs students with autism spectrum disorders as defined by the special-needs education act. In 2011, one child in 50 was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. This rapid increase must be addressed.

"Many students are discriminated against and not recognized due to this invisible disability. Some vulnerable students have deplorable conditions at school in which educational assistants escort students with 'blocker shields' and wear protective equipment/gear as their method of restraint. Some caregivers are completely unaware that their children are being subjected to these procedures.

"These students are segregated, ostracized and are labelled and advertised as dangerous. Physical and emotional barriers are being created by these so-called measures of protection. They prevent interaction with other students and the development of essential lifelong social skills.

"We want students with special needs to be accepted, respected, treated fairly and inclusively in all areas of school activities.

"We want schools to facilitate a safe and supportive educational experience by delivering effective, measurable and meaningful educational programming for all students.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That it is mandatory that all educational assistants working with special-needs students with autism spectrum disorder have certified intensive qualified training specifically for autism spectrum disorder students."

These ladies are here from my riding today. I welcome them again and hand the petition to page Sean.

### OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Ontario Ombudsman, who is an officer of the Legislature, is not allowed to provide trusted, independent investigations of complaints in the areas of hospitals, long-term-care homes, school boards, children's aid societies and retirement homes; and

"Whereas Ontario is the only province in Canada not allowing their Ombudsman to investigate any of these areas; and

"Whereas people wronged by ... institutions are left feeling helpless and ... have nowhere else to turn for help to correct systemic issues;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Grant the Ombudsman the power to investigate hospitals, long-term-care homes, school boards, children's aid societies and retirement homes."

I couldn't agree more with this. I'll affix my name to it and send it with page Taylor.

### SHALE BEACH

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ministry of Transportation closed public access to Shale Beach off Highway 26 in the town of Blue Mountains suddenly and with no consultation; and

"Whereas the closure will impact fisherman, swimmers and visitors who have been frequenting the beach for generations with no problem; and

"Whereas the closure will remove one of the only wheelchair-accessible fishing locations in the area; and

"Whereas the McGuinty-Wynne Liberal government won't let Ontarians enjoy anything for free anymore without implementing a new tax or a new fee;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Premier Kathleen Wynne and the Minister of Transportation immediately restore access to Shale Beach



so that residents can continue to enjoy the beach and all that it has to offer for generations to come.”

Mr. Speaker, I used to enjoy going to Shale Beach, and I do hope the government will listen to this petition.

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### LONG-TERM CARE

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It is my pleasure to present this petition, which comes from all over Ontario.

“Whereas there are a growing number of reported cases of abuse, neglect and substandard care for our seniors in long-term-care homes; and

“Whereas people with complaints have limited options, and frequently don’t complain because they fear repercussions, which suggests too many seniors are being left in vulnerable situations without independent oversight; and

“Whereas Ontario is one of only two provinces in Canada where the Ombudsman does not have independent oversight of long-term-care homes. We need accountability, transparency and consistency in our long-term-care home system;

“Therefore we ... petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to expand the Ombudsman’s mandate to include Ontario’s long-term-care homes in order to protect our most vulnerable seniors.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask Erica to bring it to the Clerk.

### HOSPITAL PARKING FEES

**Mr. John O’Toole:** It’s interesting; this petition on seniors’ day here at Queen’s Park reads as follows:

“Whereas the United Senior Citizens of Ontario has expressed its concerns over the high costs of parking at hospitals in Ontario on behalf of its more than 300,000 members; and

“Whereas thousands of Ontario seniors find it difficult to live on their fixed income and cannot afford these extra hospital parking fees added to their daily living costs; and

“Whereas the Canadian Medical Association Journal has said in an editorial that parking fees are a barrier to health care and add additional stress to patients who have enough to deal with;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That Ontario’s members of provincial Parliament, and the provincial government, take action to abolish parking fees for all seniors when visiting hospitals.”

I’m pleased to sign and support this and give it to Kyle, one of the pages.

### ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition that comes from all over Ontario.

“Whereas the Ontario College of Trades has been given authority to raise trade licence renewal fees by 600%; and

“Whereas as part of the working middle class we pay more than our fair share of taxes in this country with few tax breaks”—they ask “To limit the Ontario College of Trades’ authority to raise trade licence fees or to return control of trade licences to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.”

I will ask page Taylor to deliver it to the Clerk.

### ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Bill Walker:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s tradespeople are subject to stifling regulation and are compelled to pay membership fees to the unaccountable College of Trades; and

“Whereas these fees are a tax grab that drives down the wages of skilled tradespeople; and

“Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encouraging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and

“Whereas the current policies of the McGuinty/Wynne Liberal government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To immediately disband the College of Trades, cease imposing needless membership fees and enact policies to attract young Ontarians into skilled trade careers.”

I support this petition and will send it with page Daniel to the Clerks’ desk.

### DOG OWNERSHIP

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** On behalf of the thousands of dogs that have already died, this is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas aggressive dogs are found among all breeds and mixed breeds; and

“Whereas breed-specific legislation has been shown to be an expensive and ineffective approach to dog bite prevention; and

“Whereas problem dog owners are best dealt with through education, training and legislation encouraging responsible behaviour;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To repeal the breed-specific sections of the Dog Owners’ Liability Act (2005) and any related acts, and to instead implement legislation that encourages responsible ownership of all dog breeds and types.”

I couldn’t agree more. On behalf of thousands of residents and myself, I’m going to give it to Erica to be delivered to the desk.

## HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Green Energy Act has driven up the cost of electricity in Ontario due to unrealistic subsidies for certain energy sources, including the world's highest subsidies for solar power; and

"Whereas this cost is passed on to ratepayers through the global adjustment, which can account for almost half of a ratepayer's hydro bill; and

"Whereas the high cost of energy is severely impacting the quality of life of Ontario's residents, especially fixed-income seniors; and

"Whereas it is imperative to remedy Liberal mismanagement in the energy sector by implementing immediate reforms detailed in the Ontario PC white paper *Paths to Prosperity—Affordable Energy*;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately repeal the Green Energy Act, 2009, and all other statutes that artificially inflate the cost of electricity with the aim of bringing down electricity rates and abolishing expensive surcharges such as the global adjustment and debt retirement charges."

I agree with this petition and will be passing it off with Ravicha.

## ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLES

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario in regard to all-terrain vehicles.

"Whereas these vehicles are as safe as any motorcycle carrying a passenger since all of the manufacturers of the '2-up machines' have redesigned their original models by extending the wheel bases, beefing up their suspension to allow the carriage of passengers on the machine safely and providing a rear seat, many with handholds;

"Whereas the privilege to ride on secondary highways and trails with two people on a recreational vehicle is denied to off-road vehicles (ORV) operators but is granted to snowmobiles;

"Whereas the definition of an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) in regulation 316/03 no longer reflects the majority of ATVs being marketed and sold in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"Amend the definition of an ATV to include those that are: (a) designed to carry a passenger; (b) with more than four tires and designed to carry passengers; (c) without a straddle seat; and (d) carries passengers and has a steering wheel."

I agree with this petition and present it to page Pratah to bring to you.

## ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I have a "Stop the Trades Tax" petition signed by a lot of people from Bracebridge, Hunstville and Gravenhurst, and it reads:

"Stop the Trades Tax petition

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the newly created Ontario College of Trades is planning to hit hard-working tradespeople with new membership fees that, if the college has its way, will add up to \$84 million a year;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Liberal government stop their job-killing trades tax and shut down the Ontario College of Trades immediately."

I support this petition, Mr. Speaker.

## DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition from the people of the northeast of Ontario.

"Whereas the Ontario government is making PET scanning a publicly insured health service available to cancer and cardiac patients...; and

"Whereas, since October 2009, insured PET scans are performed in Ottawa, London, Toronto, Hamilton and Thunder Bay; and

"Whereas the city of Greater Sudbury is a hub for health care in northeastern Ontario, with the Sudbury Regional Hospital, its regional cancer program and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine;"

They "petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make PET scans available through the Health Sciences North, thereby serving and providing equitable access to the citizens of northeastern Ontario."

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask page Kyle to bring it to the Clerk.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

## ORDER OF BUSINESS

Resuming the debate adjourned on September 26, 2013, on the motion to apply a timetable to certain business of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I had started to speak on this particular motion late last week, and I'm just glad that the government House leader is looking forward to a replay. I'm just going to repeat what I had said at the beginning for the sake of those people who may not have been able to be here in the House when that debate was going on.

The first thing I want to say—what I find really passing strange is that we have essentially a time allocation motion, that is supported by the Conservative and Liberal



caucuses, that is going to time-allocate bills to which this entire House is able to agree on—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I know that Mr. Garfield is really interested in this particular motion, and I know that Mr. Miller is really interested in this motion—and I wouldn't mind, if you're going to do that—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Fair enough, but I would ask you to refer to the members by the name of their riding, not by their surnames.

I would ask all members of the House to respect the member for Timmins–James Bay. He has the floor and he should be given the opportunity to make his remarks, and I need to be able to hear him. Thank you.

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**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Mr. Speaker, this is why I don't want to be Speaker; I would never remember the riding names. I'm bad enough with names, and everybody who knows me knows that's the case.

I just want to say again that it is really passing strange. Here we are dealing with a time allocation motion that is going to essentially time-allocate bills that this House agrees on. They're bills that the Conservative, Liberal and New Democratic caucuses have said they're in favour of. Why are we time-allocating something if we're all in favour of it?

Let's take a look at what's in the motion. The government has, as one of the orders they want to pass in this time allocation motion, G30, the Skin Cancer Prevention Act, a bill that France Gélinas has brought to this House how many times? This government has seen fit, and thankfully so, to introduce a bill to essentially do what our member from Nickel Belt—I remembered that riding; I was very good—was trying to do. But we all agreed. We were here when all members stood in the House and said, "This is a bill we can all agree to. Let's, by unanimous consent, send this bill to committee so that we can get the committee work done and have it come back to the House."

We have the Local Food Act. Who has spoken against the Local Food Act in this House? I don't hear anybody speaking against the Local Food Act. Yes, I've heard our critic Mr. Vanthof from Timiskaming–Cochrane and I've heard Mr. Bailey from Sarnia—I'm not sure of the riding names; I'm just going to take a stab at them. I've heard certain members talk about how they want to strengthen the bill because it's a toothless wonder. It's a bill that says, "We believe in local food and we're going to have a plan, but there's not really any dollar side to the plan and we're not beholden to uphold the plan." So of course we want to amend that bill; we think there are things that could be done. But generally, who would be opposed to local foods?

Then we have the Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act. Who could be opposed to protecting consumers from things where they might be taken advantage of by some company? Then there's the Wireless Services Agreements Act, that deals with cancellation fees on wireless cellphones.

Who in this House is opposed to any of those bills? Please stand and make yourself be seen. I don't see any. So I say to myself, why are we time-allocating? Why are we time-allocating bills that this House has agreed on?

Here's the part that I think is really the irony. On some of these bills, such as the Local Food Act, for example, the Conservatives have put up 33 members out of their 36 or 37 in order to filibuster a bill that they support. Then we take a look at the next one, which is the Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act. They almost beat that record. The Conservatives put up 29 speakers on a bill they support. So one can conclude that the reason we are time-allocating is that the Tories don't trust themselves, so they have to time-allocate themselves to hold to some agreement they may have made with the Liberals to pass some of their private members' bills. That could be one of the conclusions. I would think that maybe there is more to it than that, and I'll talk about that a little bit later. But I think it's passing strange.

I just want to say for the record, as I said the other day, that it is a bad precedent to put ourselves into that this type of thing happens. Last spring and the spring before, we did programming motions—the first one supported by all three parties and the second one by the Liberals and New Democrats, to pass the budget. That's quite a different thing.

The other thing is that we, as New Democrats, negotiated major concessions from the government to do things like the Financial Accountability Office, which is a mechanism that could have prevented something like the gas plants, eHealth or Ornge from happening. So, yes, we thought it was important to allow that bill to go forward. But in this particular motion, the only thing that the government and the Tories seem really excited about is Bill 74, the EllisDon bill.

I listened to the banter going on in this House earlier today between the Liberals and Tories at questions we were asking, that I think we have every right to ask in this House—they were going on, "Oh, but you had a programming motion." Well, I will gladly defend our doing so in order to get a Financial Accountability Officer, in order to get a \$230-million fund to help kids get their first real job, to make sure that we're able to deal with waiting lists for seniors and to get a reduction on auto insurance, to say a few things. But the fact that you guys are ganging up against the building trades in favour of one contractor in this province is, I think, just deplorable.

I would have thought the McGuinty government wouldn't have done a lot of things, and I would think for sure, under the Wynne government, that there are certain things I wouldn't expect them to do. But my God, they are going against the building trades people they've seen as allies for a long time. But the part that really blows my mind is that they're doing it for one company in Ontario. How is it right that this Legislature says, "Oh well, you know what? There's a possibility that there will be, if nothing happens by 2014, a requirement for EllisDon to be able to recognize the union in the ICI agreements"? The legislation essentially says that we will treat just that

employer differently. It would be like us going in and saying, "You know what? There are three auto plants somewhere in Ontario, and we're just going to strip the collective agreement from one of the auto plants," or "There are 15 mines, and we're going to take away the collective agreement of just one mine." Or—there are how many fire halls in this province and how many police departments that are unionized?—that we all of a sudden come in this House and we say, "I will introduce a bill to take away the rights from X workers in some community who happen to be firefighters or police officers or school-teachers or workers in the mines or workers in the factories or in the auto plants of this province." If we tried to do that, I think most people would understand it to be pretty—what's the word? "Reprehensible"?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Reprehensible.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Reprehensible. You know, when you're a francophone, you have certain words—ça ne se traduit pas bien dans mon cerveau.

Anyway, I would just say, it is, I think, really bad—there we go; I'll do it that way. It is really bad when a Legislature tries to use its authority to treat one employer different than everybody else in the province.

So here we are. Why is there time allocation? I think partly because the Tories don't trust themselves to hold their own deals when it comes to whatever deal they made up with the Liberals. But the real issue here is Bill 74. It's the EllisDon bill. That's what this thing is all about. We have a bill before the House that is going to give one employer treatment that no other employer gets.

According to some of the things that I've read in the Toronto Star and the Globe and Mail and others, we have a situation where the company is purported to have given money to the Liberal and Tory parties, and it is alleged—I don't know if that's the case; I think it might be—that in fact this is the root cause of this thing: that they're dealing with EllisDon because it is a friend to the Liberal Party and a friend to the Tories now. The Tories want to get—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Don't go there. You're ascribing motive. I would ask you to withdraw.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Okay, I'll withdraw, but I'm only saying what I've read in the Toronto Star. It's something that was in the Toronto Star and the Globe and Mail. It's not me making this up. It was based on a letter from Randy Hillier that was circulated within the Conservative caucus, and I'm only—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I'll once again ask the member to withdraw. This is against the rules of the House.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Very good, Speaker. I will withdraw, but I—I withdraw, period. I will rephrase.

One has to ask themselves the question: What is the motivation for doing this in the first place? I think one of the conclusions that you can draw is, somebody is saying, "Listen, these are important contributors to our parties," and one party wants to maintain those contributions and the other one would like to get more.

I withdraw, Speaker. I'm sorry. I slipped. I am sorry. I won't do it again. Please sit, sir. I don't want you to get up too often. I withdraw, Speaker.

So one has to ask themselves the question.

There's an interesting article that appears in Inside Queen's Park—if everybody doesn't get this, you should—written by Graham Murray, who has been around this place for a long time, who probably has a better pulse on what's going on in this Legislature and this province than most people. If you don't have the publication, you should get hold of it. It's called Inside Queen's Park. It's quite good.

Anyway, it says, "Divvying Up the EllisDon Boodle"—the reason I'm stuttering is I'm looking at the Speaker Talking to the Clerks. "Of course, the absence of so many PCs and the equally surprising presence of a whole bunch of Liberals did not just happen. IQP," which is Inside Queen's Park, "has learned that it was John Duffy of StrategyCorp, working as the GR consultant to EllisDon, who devised a classic back-scratching scheme to get it through. The PCs would undertake sponsorship of Bill 74 to relieve the Liberals of the embarrassment of taking the lead on another contract-stripping measure, worse even than Bill 115. And enough of the Liberals would take part in the vote to ensure its passage. Then the party"—

**Ms. Soo Wong:** You can't say that.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I'm just reading what's in here.

"Then the party bag-men and bag-women would re-balance their construction industry corporate donations, under the guidance of StrategyCorp boss Leslie Noble"—we all know who that is—"to ensure that both backs were well scratched.

"Small wonder that the Premier has greeted Hudak's initiative by talking positively about 'common ground,' though the matter calls for EllisDon president and CEO Geoff Smith and building trades leader Patrick Dillon"—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** If you persist in this line of argument in your speech, I am going to have no choice but to move on and recognize another speaker.

1400

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Thank you very much, Speaker. I was just quoting what was inside—I hear you, but it's quite interesting that we find ourselves in this spot.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Well, I'm just quoting what was in the Toronto Star, and what was quoted in the Globe and Mail and what's quoted in Inside Queen's Park. I've seen members do this. I've been here for 24 years; I've seen it plenty of times.

But anyway, I'll take my direction from the Speaker. I respect the Chair and understand that the Chair has the purview to do what he's doing. We'll just let it be. But I just want to say again that, really, you have to ask yourself: Why is this being done? We have, for example, a number of incidences across this province where workers, citizens, seniors and kids have been asking the



provincial government to deal with certain things because they are of importance.

We know, for example, with IBI therapy—intensive behavioural therapy—that when it comes to a parent being able to get support for their child who is autistic for IBI therapy, the government hid behind the courts for how long, saying that they couldn't do anything to be able to move this forward. But now, all of a sudden, because it's one company, EllisDon, never mind that it was before the courts. Never mind that the court has already spoken, and I'll talk to that a little bit later. We couldn't move on IBI therapy for kids at a quick enough pace, but we can move EllisDon through the House like that?

I think of what has happened with a whole bunch of issues when it comes to long-term care across this province. We are proud in this province to have a publicly funded system of health care. I would stand our system up to any other across the world outside of Canada. I think there are some provinces that may do some things better, but overall ours is pretty good.

Here we have seniors in our community who are saying, "We agree with the direction" that was started back in the time that I first got here, under the Bob Rae government—and has been supported by every government since—to coordinate and facilitate the ability for seniors to stay at home, rather than being in a long-term-care institution or being in a hospital.

So here we are: We have all kinds of seniors who are saying, "We are having a more difficult time getting services dispatched to us so that we can stay in our homes and live independently." I've raised, and other members have raised here, cases in our own constituencies where certain seniors have been forced with a decision: "Can I stay home, or do I go to the hospital? Can I stay home, or do I go to the long-term-care facility?"

Why is it that we are still dragging our feet and not moving at the speed that we need to, to respond to the needs of seniors back home, in all of our constituencies, who have a need for access to home care and an assessment so they can get the services they need? And yet, in this House, we can all of a sudden say, "Oh my God, the sky is falling. EllisDon—one company; they need help. Let's hurry up, go through the Legislature and give them what they need."

I think a lot of people back home look at that and say, "I don't like it." We understand that every company in this province has issues that it has to deal with. I don't have an argument with any company trying to find ways to deal with the issues that are important to them. I think that if there is a legislative solution or a programming solution that needs to be done to deal with their economic situation, it should go through the regular process.

It shouldn't be any different than anybody else, but no: In this case, we are going to go lickety-split to try to pass this thing through the Legislature without, quite frankly, giving it the same treatment that we would give to other organizations, or to other issues that need to be done. I say to myself that you have to ask yourself the question—

### *Interjections.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I thought I heard somebody back there say something.

So, where are we at? Let's review where we're at. There was a document that was found that was dated to 1956 in Sarnia that proved that, in fact, a contract had been signed between EllisDon and the building trades. What ended up happening was that, once that document was found, it was brought before the Ontario Labour Relations Board for a ruling because, as per the legislation, if there was an existing contract in the region that existed and was upheld, it means to say that that particular company would find itself under the ICI for the industry province-wide.

The company didn't like that, so off they went to the Ontario Labour Relations Board. There was a case that was put before them in order to take a look at if the document was legal—is this something that should happen? Should those workers properly be unionized? The Ontario Labour Relations Board said, "Yes."

"I maintain that the document," said the hearings officer, "is in fact a legal document." It proves that there is a relationship between EllisDon and the building trades in that area, and that in fact there is an issue here that needs to be recognized by the Ontario Labour Relations Board as being a legitimate issue.

The OLRB hearings officer said, "I'm going to give you a two-year pause." It's called an estoppel. It was an estoppel that was given to give EllisDon and the unions a chance to try to work this out, rather than recognizing the union immediately after the OLRB decision.

That's how we end up over here. All of a sudden EllisDon decides, "We need to be able to deal with this. Rather than taking our chances in court, we're going to try to get the House to deal with this particular issue," because one of the directions of the court was that if the Legislature speaks to this issue, that may resolve the situation.

What we find out is that StrategyCorp hires Mr. Duffy. I raised it in the House today and I wasn't ruled out of order. Patrick Duffy was hired by StrategyCorp, and one of the things that—

### *Interjection.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Did I say "Patrick"? Sorry. John Duffy—the wrong Duffy. Well, they're kind of—anyway, I won't go there. I stand corrected. It's John Duffy. He essentially was hired by StrategyCorp, and StrategyCorp essentially started, right at the beginning, lobbying and trying to figure out how they can deal with the EllisDon situation because they were a client of StrategyCorp.

So what did they do? According to what we can see by the evidence that we've seen so far, they got a Conservative member to move a bill, and the Liberals quietly allowed it to go by as a way for them to get cover and not be seen as the bad guys. But the larger issue becomes: Why has this, all of a sudden, become a priority for Kathleen Wynne and the Liberal government? Because she said, during the leadership race—and I remember; I

was at the convention. I was doing, as they say, the commentary for the NDP at the time, with our good friend Peter Kormos, who was there—the last time that I saw him alive. Anyway, at that time she got up and said, “I will not abrogate collective agreements.” She was pretty clear. I thought, “Good for her.” I think that’s advice that should be well heeded. If we have an ability, as workers in this province, to organize, the government shouldn’t get in the way and take away those collective agreements. It was kind of a nod, nod, wink, wink, “You can trust me on that,” and it was a way for her to get some of the unionized vote to come to her, especially in the building trades.

What happened between the time of the leadership, her election, and now? All I know is, StrategyCorp was hired by EllisDon. They went and got Mr. John Duffy, who brags he’s well connected to the Liberals and played several roles on the Kathleen Wynne leadership team, and all of a sudden they’re reported in the papers and in IQP—Inside Queen’s Park—as having concocted the strategy that brings us to where we are now.

I asked the Premier in the House—and I think the question has to be answered, because it hasn’t been: Who lobbied her and who lobbied her government in order to deal with this particular legislation? Why, all of a sudden, has this become a priority for the government? I remember being in discussion with the government House leader and a member of the opposition. Until recently, that has never been an issue that has been pressing. We had told the government last spring, because they obviously knew—we stood in this House and voted against Bill 74—that we would not be party to any kind of a deal that has this bill go through the House. We’re opposed to the bill; we think it’s a bad idea.

Instead, what you end up with is StrategyCorp being hired and StrategyCorp putting in place a strategy that includes cooking a deal between the Liberals and Tories to be able to get this thing through the House. I accept that people are allowed to lobby us, but I have to say to myself that there are a couple of problems with this; one which I can’t comment to any more because you’re going to tell me to stop speaking and skip to the next one, so I’ll be careful about what I say there. What are the interests of the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party is what’s at question, I think, to a degree. I don’t mean the caucuses; I mean the political parties.

The other one is: Why, all of a sudden, did the Premier decide that this had to be something of importance? What happened between last spring and now for this to become, all of a sudden, the central issue that this Legislature has to deal with? I can tell you, we are opposed to hardly anything inside this time allocation motion. Are we opposed to G30, the skin cancer protection act? No; we’re fine. Are we opposed to G36, the Local Food Act, as New Democrats? No; with amendment, we’re fine. G55, the Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act: No, we’re fine. G60, the Wireless Services Agreements Act: We don’t have a problem. The Tories have put in a number of private members’ bills. There’s a few of them

that we probably want to see amended, but generally—like the development services committee; why would we be opposed that? Pretty well all—almost everything in this time allocation motion is set to pass through the House anyway. It’s not as if we as New Democrats, or even the Conservatives or Liberals, are opposed. It’s all Bill 74.

**1410**

I think that’s the part that we all find a little bit reprehensible, because it speaks to the worse side of politics. I think when the public sees us and sees legislators doing this kind of thing and they see political parties, in this case the Liberal and Conservative parties, doing this kind of thing, they say, “Ah, it reaffirms my non-faith in politicians and reaffirms what I think about politicians.” I think it diminishes this institution. We all accept and we all know—there’s nobody in the House that would disagree with me on this point—we’re all honourable members who come here trying to do the right thing. Our system of democracy is a beacon to people around the world. If you look at what’s happening in Egypt and look at what’s happening in Syria and other places, people are dying to get the rights we have in this province—literally, as a result of them fighting for a form of democracy. So when we diminish democracy by doing this kind of thing, I don’t think that helps us. I think it’s a really bad thing for us to go in that particular way. So I say again—not to be repeating this over, but I think it needs to be said—why are we doing this? I think it has to do with Bill 74.

Now, here’s the interesting part. As of last week, we were debating this time allocation motion. There was an OLRB decision that had been rendered almost two years ago, and there was an appeal done by EllisDon against the decision of the Ontario Labour Relations Board. They filed leave to appeal, they were found to have grounds for the appeal, and they brought it to the Superior Court. The Superior Court I think heard the case sometime last spring.

So here we are, things are just chugging along, the Tories bring in the bill with the support of the Liberals; then all of a sudden, lo and behold, literally hours before the Liberal convention this weekend, when they had the provincial council in Hamilton, a decision of the Superior Court comes down. I’ve got to believe it’s just timing—but man, what timing. I’ve been around this place long enough to know we don’t normally catch those kinds of breaks, but I’ve got to believe it’s timing. The Ontario Labour Relations Board ruling was overturned by the Superior Court, which means to say, why are we still doing this? Didn’t the government say the only reason we’re doing this is because of poor old EllisDon? Isn’t that the reason the Tories want this legislation done? “Oh, it’s because of poor EllisDon. We’ve got to fix EllisDon’s problem.”

The court kind of did that. They essentially overturned the Ontario Labour Relations Board decision—which is a whole other thing that I’ll talk about in a minute—and have said, “If you don’t like it,” said the Superior Court



when they brought down their decision on Friday around 4 o'clock, just before a Liberal provincial council—again, I'll say, what timing. Some people are really lucky, I must say. Hmm, I wonder about that. But the point is, the decision was made by the court, and you beckon the question, why is this bill not being withdrawn? Why have we not withdrawn this bill in light of what the court has said? If the government and the Tories feel they've won the thing by way of the Superior Court, then if they're true to what they've saying in this particular debate, then I would say that in that particular case, they should withdraw the bill. With that in mind I want to move a motion. The motion reads as follows: that the references relating to Bill 74 in government order number 8 be deleted. Maybe if I could send that over; I just need a page.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Mr. Bisson has moved that the references relating to Bill 74 in government order number 8 be deleted.

Now we commence the debate on the amendment to the government order.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Mr. Speaker, I moved that motion on behalf of our caucus and our leader, Andrea Horwath, for a reason; I moved it for a couple of reasons. The first one is, it's pretty clear this matter has been dealt with before the courts. If the government is true to their word and they think this was all about clarifying the situation with EllisDon, then I think, quite frankly, the government has a pretty simple decision to make. I would say—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** What was that?

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Okay, I'll speak to that in a minute. But thank you. That will give me another five minutes to talk.

I just say that if the government is so confident that this matter has been dealt with by way of the court decision—and the Tories—then we should be withdrawing this bill. The government across the way says, "Well, what about the appeal?" First of all, there has to be a leave to appeal. The leave to appeal has to be accepted. It has to be proven that there was an error in law, and maybe that will be proven or maybe not. I haven't talked to anybody in the building trades to know exactly where they're at on that one.

But here's my point: By the time this thing gets to the Supreme Court, the estoppel will still stand, is it not the case? I'm just looking to the people here who know this stuff more than I do. If they file a leave to appeal and they're granted a leave and go to the Supreme Court, the estoppel will still stand. So EllisDon is still in a pretty good spot, are they not?

If the government thinks, "We're worried about the appeal because we might lose it," well, at the very least wait until after the appeal, for God's sake. But, no, in this particular case, they seem in a hurry to do it. Why? Because if the legislation is passed here in the House, it essentially quashes—it pretty well deals with the issue. They just don't want to take a chance. I say to myself,

after years and years of the building trades supporting the Liberals in a lot of cases—I've got to say, I'm hurt as a New Democrat. I know that some of you—it's hard—have supported the Liberals.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** It's not quite enough money.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** No, that's not the point. That is not the point. I think everybody is free to support who they want.

Imagine how they feel after having supported the Liberal Party for years on a number of issues—the sign crews, the fundraisers, the door knockers, the things they have to do—and all of a sudden, they just got a knife in the back. I don't think that sits too well with people. I'm surprised that the Liberals are still going forward with this particular initiative just on that basis. But that's your choice. You've got to do what you've got to do.

But I make the point again: If the OLRB decision has been quashed by the Superior Court and let's say the appeal goes off to the Supreme Court, there's no need to pass this legislation now. That's why we as New Democrats, and I as the House leader in regard to my leader Andrea Horwath, have moved this particular amendment.

It will mean that when we come to a vote at the end of this debate on this particular motion, the government and the Conservatives will have a clear choice: We can go forward with the time allocation motion on those bills that we support, because I think there is a consensus to support most of what is in this time allocation motion, but remove the EllisDon bill, Bill 74, put it aside, and let's see what happens at the Supreme Court of Canada. It may take some time to get there, but at the end nobody is going to get hurt.

The problem is that if you pass this bill, my belief in reading it is that it's far beyond what you're doing with EllisDon. But that's for a whole other debate; we'll do that when we get to committee. I say to myself that the government has a pretty clear choice here, to be able to deal with some of these issues in the way that they're doing it.

The other thing I just want to speak to very quickly is the decision of the Superior Court of Ontario. On the weekend, I read the 74 or 75 pages, depending if you count the title page or not—I was having that discussion with somebody this morning. When you read the Superior Court decision, it's interesting, because the arbitrator said a couple of things. He said there is a document that exists that proves there was an agreement signed between EllisDon and the construction trades. One of the arguments EllisDon tried to argue is that that document wasn't any good. It wasn't a valid document.

As I read through this, unless I completely misread the ruling, there is some discussion about the validity of the document on the part of the Superior Court justices, but in the conclusion it never says it is; he maintains that the document is okay—I'm just looking for nods from those who read the decision. My understanding as I read that—and I'm not an expert, so I want somebody to correct me if I'm wrong—is that what was said in the court decision is that the document that was produced, which dates to

1956, was in fact a document that was of poor quality but never, in the conclusion of the three justices, do they say the document is invalid. I didn't see that in the conclusion. It tells me that, in fact, there is an agreement between EllisDon and the construction trades on this particular issue.

1420

What I think is more interesting is that the decision of the OLRB is struck down because of the estoppel. Again, let's talk in language we can all understand. The Ontario Labour Relations Board, the OLRB, essentially, when he made the decision, in order to say that this document was valid, said, "Listen, we're going to give EllisDon and the union two years to work this out or to get the Legislature to work this out. But in two years' time, if you don't, then the letter stands" and it would be deemed to be an agreement to which part—EllisDon would become part of the central agreement.

The judges strike down the estoppel, which is that two-year pause, and I find that a bit odd. I'm not a lawyer, but it seemed to me that what the Ontario Labour Relations Board was doing was saying, "Listen, I find in favour of the unions. But I recognize there's going to be a need for some time to work all this out, so I'm giving you two years. If you can't work it out, then the Legislature will have two years to work it out, whatever way that they want to deal with it."

We all remember our good friend—not my good friend, but to some over here in the Tory caucus. Mike Harris, when he was Premier, essentially killed a whole bunch of these agreements as a result of legislation I think he passed in the late 1990s, if I remember correctly. This particular document falls outside of that law.

What you've got here is the Liberals advocating on behalf of a Mike Harris bill that they opposed when they were in opposition. I was here when that bill came forward. We thought at the time that what Harris was doing was wrong, because he was taking away the right for workers to be part of a collective agreement, that rightfully should have been part of a collective agreement. What we've got here is that left is right, right is left, up is down, and down is up. We've got the Liberals essentially supporting what Mike Harris did some years ago. I find that really ironic.

In more cases than one, I have seen Liberals always do this. In the public debate: "Oh, I feel your pain. Oh, I sympathize with you. Oh, I love you. Let me give you a hug."

Then they go to the cabinet table and they put a knife in somebody's back. I've seen that so many times in this place.

At least the Conservatives—I will give them this: I don't agree with the direction these guys are going. Imagine that: a white paper that says my kid—well, in this case, my grandkid—my grandchildren couldn't get a student loan unless they had a certain mark, in order to get into university or college. I think that's silliness. The fact that they put that in white papers tells me to what

degree these guys, in my view, are going in the wrong direction.

But I'll give them this: They have the courage of their conviction, and they put their position out there.

Mr. Hudak has no problem, along with his caucus, espousing all kinds of policies that I, as a social democrat and New Democrat, cannot support. But at least they're honest about it. I know that if they get elected, they'll actually do it. They will have no problem doing, "My kid has got to get a certain grade to get a student loan." They're going to have no problem continuing the privatization of Hydro. They want to privatize Hydro beyond what it is now. My God, that has been a hell of a mess. They want to privatize the OLG. Man, that has been a mess.

I will not support anything these guys will do in that direction, but I know they're serious about it and they'll do it. But the Liberals—"Oh, no, I'm on your side. Oh, let me tell you. Come to my fundraiser, and we'll be friends. We're all a great big happy family. We love each other"—

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** And have a conversation.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:**—"and let's have a conversation. Are you upset? Oh, go talk to my minister and have another conversation." And then they just turn their backs on them.

That's what's happening in this particular bill, Bill 74. They completely turned their backs on the building trades and have made a decision that it's more important for them to uphold EllisDon than it is to uphold what is the law in the province of Ontario when it comes to prior agreements, when it comes to central bargaining—something that I don't think anybody would have expected the Liberals would have done. But the Liberals are motivated by one thing: re-election. That's what the Liberals are motivated by.

I'm not going to say the Liberals have never done anything good in government. I wouldn't say that. They have done some things that I have supported and my caucus has supported. But my point is, it's all motivated by trying to get re-elected. It's not about doing the right thing. It's about, "How can I do something that will benefit myself and my party towards re-election?"

I look at Catherine Fife, the member from Kitchener-Waterloo, who ran in a by-election a year ago.

When Mike Harris—I mean, when Kathleen Wynne said—do you see how I interpose them? Wow. It is kind of scary, right? When Kathleen—actually, it was Dalton McGuinty—like Mike Harris. Dalton McGuinty said, "All right; we need another seat to get a majority in this Legislature. What can we do to win a seat?"

They went to the Conservative Party. They went to a particular member and said, "How about you become the chair of the Workers' Compensation Board?"

First of all, I would never put a Tory in charge of the Workers' Compensation Board. Why would you ever want to do that? It is not a good thing for workers, I can tell you; I've been there. I got into politics advocating on behalf of people who are injured trying to get their rights



through the Workers' Compensation Board. Well, that was my first problem.

But it was all about gaming the system so that the Liberal Party was able to create a by-election to which they thought they would be able to win the seat in order to gain a majority in this House. Was it about the benefit of the people of Ontario?

**Interjections:** No.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Was it about doing the right thing?

**Interjections:** No.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** For the Liberal Party, it was: doing the right thing for themselves. So they gamed it, first of all, by creating a by-election.

Here's the best one: Then they say, "All right; what issue can we do so that we're seen like Tories and we can steal Conservative votes?" They sat and they strategized, Don Guy and Madame Wynne and others who were at cabinet, because they all voted for this. They can try to take their distance all they want, but they were there; they did it. They said, "Oh, got an idea, Premier. Let's kick the heck out of the teachers. If we see ourselves and are seen by the people of Ontario as being tough to those union bosses," as the Tories like to say, "and that we put the boots to the teachers, the good people of Kitchener-Waterloo are going to vote and put us into office." Were they up for a big surprise.

It was clear from the moment we were knocking on doors in Kitchener-Waterloo that people understood what the game was. They didn't like it. They were, first of all, unhappy with the member who decided she was going to resign in order to take a job at the Workers' Compensation Board, but that was her right. I'm not going to quibble with that. But man, were they upset with the government that was trying to game the negotiation with teachers in order to win a by-election in order to get a majority government.

You talk about politically cynical—my God. But the good people of Kitchener-Waterloo said, "We're not going to buy either one of them," and they brought to this House our good friend Catherine Fife. The member from Kitchener-Waterloo has been an amazing member of our caucus, and in addition has done a great job on a whole bunch of issues that she has been in charge of.

But the bottom line here is: Why did the Liberals do what they did prior to that by-election? Because they thought it was going to serve their political interests. Right? And here we are now. Again, the same lesson is not being learned by the Liberal Party, this time with Kathleen Wynne. They figure, "We can count on the building trades always being inside. In the end, they'll always be there for us because we've been there for them before." I give the government credit; they were there for the building trades when it came to card-based certification, something that I wish all workers in this province had. But what did the government do? They had a minute to stab them in the back because it was to their advantage to be able to do something for one contractor called EllisDon. They did what was right for the Liberal Party. I think that's wrong.

I think, yes, we are all trying to get re-elected. I'm not going to get on my high horse here and say, "We New Democrats are not trying to get re-elected. We're not trying to get more seats." Of course we are. Every party here is trying to do that. We all want to be on the government side of the House, and I'm looking forward to the day that Andrea Horwath becomes the first elected woman Premier in the province of Ontario, and we, as New Democrats, are able to deal with the issues that confront this province today. But I'll tell you the difference. If you look at what Andrea Horwath has been doing since getting here in this minority Parliament, it's all about remembering the people back home. We haven't been there saying, "Oh, let's negotiate something for ourselves. Let's get some kind of cushy deal. Let's do some backroom politics." None of that. Andrea Horwath has been front and centre and has told people exactly what she's doing.

It's interesting—I noticed on the weekend—Kathleen Wynne taking out of Andrea Horwath's playbook what we did in the first budget, which is: Let's consult and find out what people really want. What a novel idea; my God. Andrea Horwath was doing that two years ago; they just finally figured it out.

If you look at what we achieved through the two years of the minority Parliament, we managed to put into the budget—Liberal budget number 1 and Liberal budget number 2—issues that are important for the people back home. Seniors back home—what did we say? They shouldn't have to wait for an assessment the way they have been waiting in this province for years. We need to have a mechanism that speeds up the assessment so that seniors back home are able to get an assessment so they can get long-term-care services in the home.

We said that kids shouldn't have to live in their parents' basement forever once they get out of university or college because they don't have a real first job. We demanded and we got from the Liberal Party a concession in the budget that said, "We want a program that is going to provide an apprenticeship-style program to those people who have graduated or trying to get their first job." We're now starting to see the benefit of that—17% youth unemployment in this province.

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It was Andrea Horwath and the New Democrats who made that a condition of support for the budget. We said, "People are sick and tired of getting gouged every time we pay our bills at the end of the month. If it ain't hydro, it's the auto insurance company."

We said, "Listen, we need to make sure that we pass on the savings to consumers." Why? Because the Ontario government twice has passed legislation that helps to cut the costs of the insurance companies. Both times they have said that they were going to pass the savings on to the consumer, and at no time did it happen.

We said, "Let's hold the government at least accountable for something they said they would do." We said, "We want to see a 15% reduction."

Now, the government agreed to that. It looks now like they're trying to slow it down over two years. It will be our job in order to push this government to get it done in the year that we want, but those are things that help people directly.

The Financial Accountability Officer: Can you imagine if we had had a Kevin Page in Ontario when the government was making announcements about cancelling gas plants in Mississauga and Oakville?

Can you imagine, under the Ornge situation, as the government was setting up the boondoggle at Ornge, what an FAO officer could have done? Can you imagine what Kevin Page could have done if we had had a similar officer here when it came to eHealth? We're talking about \$3 billion of money that wouldn't have had to have been spent, because, my friends, it is a really simple principle, why people don't break the law: the fear of being caught. That's what makes you not want to break the law. When somebody feels that there's a chance that they're going to get caught, they are more on the straight and narrow.

That's what the FAO is all about: to make sure that the Financial Accountability Officer, who will be an officer of this House—and I'm proud to say we passed that legislation last week; a few of my colleagues and I were in the LG's suite when it was being signed—is going to make a real difference in people's lives.

Imagine the \$3 billion on those three boondoggles that wouldn't have been spent: \$3 billion that we could put on our debt or deficit; \$3 billion that we could have put to home care; \$3 billion that we could have done in IBI treatments. There are all kinds of choices that we could have made with that \$3 billion. Instead, we spent \$3 billion, and we're having to make up the difference.

I say that it's a question of priorities. This caucus stands proud in saying that we always remember that what we're here to do is to serve the people of Ontario and those people who have voted for us.

Are you going to have everybody in your constituency always happy with every decision that you make in a caucus? Absolutely not; it's impossible. The reality is that everybody has a different view on different issues. But what you try to do at the very least is try to get it right most of the time, and try to do what's rational and what's the right thing to do. If you're governed by, "I could do the wrong thing or the right thing," you should always do the right thing.

I think that's what is really disappointing with this Liberal administration. Kathleen Wynne, who said, "Oh, I'm different. I'm going to turn the page. I'm not Dalton McGuinty. I'm going to be a whole new face and a whole new government to the province of Ontario"—I see this Bill 74 is exactly what Dalton McGuinty would have done. It's exactly what the Liberal Party always does, and that's what is so galling about this—and this at a time when Kathleen Wynne is supposedly somebody who believes in the democratic right of a Parliament and the opposition? I just say shame on her. This flies in the face of who Kathleen Wynne and the Liberals say they are.

The fact that you're time-allocating a bill that everybody agrees on, except for Bill 74, is silly. The government House leader—I have had the discussions with him, and I had the discussion with the Tory House leader. We could have easily come to an agreement when it comes to how we deal with these bills and bring them through the House—except for Bill 74; we would have never agreed to that—and move forward.

Now, I heard the Tory House leader say, "Oh, yeah, but you kept me out of the discussions when you guys were going on last year about your programming motion." Hogwash. I sat in his office, along with my assistant Ramiro Mora, along with Jeffrey Kroeker and Mr. Wilson, and said, "Listen, we have negotiated, from the Liberals, concessions in the budget. They have said yes to everything that we want. We cannot, at this point, not go forward with the budget, so be part of a programming motion that deals with the things that are important to you."

The Tories decided, for their own reasons, not to be part of it. We tried on a number of occasions, both myself and the government House leader, to get the Tories to be onside. They decided not to. Well, that was their choice.

But in this case, what we have is a time allocation motion, because all you're trying to do now is to pass a bill that, quite frankly, is not to the benefit of most Ontarians. Quite frankly, it's to the benefit of the Liberal and Tory parties. I say shame on you when it comes to that particular issue.

I kind of veered away from the issue of the ruling of the Superior Court justices, and I've only got six minutes, so I do want to come back to it. I just find it an interesting decision, because as I understand the decision, there was some question in regard to the documents, but the conclusion was never that the documents were not proper, that they were not legal. It wasn't, "Oh, we ruled against this because we don't accept the documents," unless I'm wrong. That was my read of it. It was a decision that says there should never have been an estoppel given; there should never have been given a two-year pause, and, "For the basis of the estoppel or that two-year pause, I'm throwing out the OLRB decision." It's a bit sad, because I think what the arbitrator was trying to do was to give the parties a couple of years to figure out how to work this out, and if they couldn't figure out a way, at least allow the Legislature to clarify what the legislation should be in this province when it comes to these types of agreements.

I can tell you that New Democrats would have upheld—if an employer signed with the union, then they signed with the union. It's a pretty simple thing. There's a process that we should all respect, and we should respect the democratic rights of workers to be able to join a union. It's a bit sad that the thing was thrown out because of the estoppel, because now we find ourselves in a situation where we have a decision that kills the OLRB decision, and essentially there's no need for this bill.



We asked the government in question period this morning if they were willing to withdraw the bill. They didn't respond. They were very careful about what they said. We moved the unanimous consent motion—my leader, Andrea Horwath, earlier today—asking that Bill 74 be removed from this time allocation motion. The Liberals said no. That's why we have moved this particular motion today to make it clear that there is a way forward. There is a way forward for you to not be seen as trying to help only but one employer in the province of Ontario—in this case, it's EllisDon—and doing what you're here to do, which is to represent the democratic right of our citizens. The way you can do that is to vote in favour of the amendment that we put forth that essentially removes Bill 74 from this particular time allocation motion.

I've only got a couple of minutes left. I think it needs to be said again—and this is where I started—that it is a sad, sad state of affairs that we're time-allocating a motion to time-allocate bills to which there's agreement. It demonstrates the degree to which this House really doesn't work, and I think bodes not well on the Premier.

The Premier said, when she returned this fall, that she was looking for ways for this Legislature to work together so that we can do the work of Ontario. My leader, Andrea Horwath, and our caucus were clear and said, "Listen, we are here to do that. We have proven that's what we're all about." We were prepared to deal with bills like the Skin Cancer Prevention Act, the Local Food Act, the Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act and the Wireless Services Agreements Act, and with the developmental services committee. We're prepared to deal with all of those things. Instead, this government decided that what they needed to do was to slip in this Bill 74, because in Ontario lies a company that is going to be treated differently than anybody else.

The only conclusion you can come to, in my view, is that you're doing this for crass political reasons in regard to what the Liberal Party needs going into the next election. And it's not about policy, quite frankly; it's about the pecunia. That's what it's all about. Because now they can go to each and every contractor in Ontario, never mind EllisDon, pound their chests and say, "We're just as anti-labour as the Tories are," behind the doors, and then, when you're out in front of the trade union halls, say, "We're your friend." I think it's rather sad that you're taking that position.

I said sometime within these 50 minutes that I've had to speak that we are lucky to live in a democracy that gives us the right to choose our politicians every four years and kick the bums out when we want to get rid of them. We're blessed to live in such a society, but democracy is not just about voting every four years; it's about the institution of democracy, and trade unionism is a key part to that democratic institution. It says workers have the right to organize and be part of a collective agreement and to band together as workers to negotiate with their employer. Most employers and unions have a pretty good relationship. Most unions understand that when times are

tough, you ask for less. You saw it with the teachers this last set of bargaining. God, they took a two-year wage freeze.

Instead, this government has decided to do what it's doing. I think it speaks against the encouragement of what is one of the principal democratic institutions in this province, and that's trade unionism. I think it's important that we do what we can to give workers that right to say, "I want to organize," for whatever reason, "I want to be part of a collective agreement," for whatever reason, and for them to freely bargain with their employer the conditions of work. When you think about it, that is such a strong expression of our belief in the democratic institution.

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I've really got to say to the government that when the government decides, all of a sudden, to do the Mike Harris thing and to say, "We're going to speak to the employer community in language they can understand, and when we go talk to them, we'll talk about how tough we can be against unions," and somehow or other that's good for your coffers, for the Liberal Party to go get more money and put yourself in a better position to win because of the money coming in, I think that's a really, really sad state of affairs.

Again, I would say, on behalf of Andrea Horwath and our caucus, that we have put this motion forward. It's an opportunity for this Legislature to do the right thing, and we're going to ask both the government Liberals and the opposition Tories to vote with us on our amendment to withdraw Bill 74 from this very programming motion that we're talking about today.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I'm really pleased to have the honour to stand in this House to debate the programming motion that will fast-track what essentially is an omnibus-type piece of legislation. I say "honour" because we all speak in this House on behalf of the representatives that sent us here. The only thing that we produce at the end of the day are our words. They're the only tangible thing that we have at the end of the day as our reference to what we believe in, what the indications and comments and ideas of our communities are and how we represent those ideals in this chamber.

Essentially, what this programming motion does is fast-track and eliminate our ability to speak on these important bills that are built within the context of the programming motion.

I'd like to just take a brief moment to introduce some folks who are in the House today to listen to this debate. I don't think they've been recognized. James St. John is the business manager for Central Ontario Building Trades. Terry Snooks is the business manager for the United Association Local 46 for plumbers and steamfitters and president of the Central Ontario Building Trades. Greg Mitchell is the business manager of the United Association Local 853 of sprinkler fitters. They are all here in the members' west gallery to hear this important debate.

I'm pleased to follow my colleague, my friend, the honourable member from Timmins–James Bay, who spent the better part of 50 minutes presenting our ideas and our position on time allocation in general, on this bill, G8, and on the very nature of the context of this bill. We have learned that at the nucleus of the bill is Bill 74, which is really the motivating factor for the programming motion.

We've heard what Bill 74 intends to do. At the crux of its intent is to ultimately eliminate a long-standing collective agreement and bargaining rights for several trades with a singular company, EllisDon. From the outset, that is a slippery slope for this Legislature to embark on. It's one that, in the two years in this House that I've been here, I've seen twice now: the abrogation and the real destruction of collective bargaining rights. It happened before in the last session when the Liberal Party joined with the Progressive Conservative Party to circumvent bargaining rights for teachers in this province.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** No, that's not true.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** It is absolutely the truth. It was called Bill 115, and it only passed because of the support of the Liberals and the Tories, and now we see that again. It's interesting that those involved and those affected by Bill 74 will now, unfortunately, feel the same pain that our province's teachers did. They'll feel the same effect. They'll feel as though they've been taken advantage of, really, because we all know that the Liberal Party of this province has had a long-standing relationship with the teachers. We know that they've had a long-standing relationship with the trades, and I think by and large it's been a relationship that has been mutually beneficial.

I'll tell you, coming from the perspective of a tradesperson, as a labourer, I have benefited personally—many have heard this story—by the fact that we have card certification in this province. It meant that when I was working on the highways, in the heavy sector, I was under a collective agreement that only came about because the workers under that collective agreement signed cards to become unionized. That is a benefit that I think launched my family, launched the fact that I could raise a family in this province—the benefits, the wages, the protection under health and safety.

What the party opposite, the governing party, is doing today is saying, "Forget labour law. Forget bargaining rights. Forget agreements. There's a massive corporation in this province that needs our help, and we're going to do absolutely everything we can to cater to their needs." Under the guise of this omnibus programming motion is Bill 74, that is built exclusively, singularly, to help EllisDon in their operations essentially, ostensibly, to compete with foreign companies that are coming in and bidding against them.

Now, I can understand that competition is a part of the free market. I can understand that there may be some fear that these foreign companies are coming in, and because they're not unionized, they're going to be able to undercut what is a long-standing corporation that, by the way, has profited quite handsomely over the last several

years in this province, with revenues in excess of, I think, \$2 billion a year. But what surprises me is that it's coming from the Progressive Conservatives. Their federal cousins are promoters of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, CETA, which opens the floodgates to foreign corporations to come in and eat up domestic work in the construction sector and municipal tendering. You guys are all about competition, but yet, when it comes to protecting one singular massive corporation, "Hey, let's hammer the workers; let's destroy their collective agreements; let's, again, remove their ability to bargain." It gives me a feeling of sickness, really, truly and honestly, that this House is being used for that singular purpose, that it has risen to the top of the priority list. As my honourable colleague from Timmins–James Bay has said, the members across the way should be ashamed.

I don't think that the members on the opposition side, the Progressive Conservatives, would be ashamed, because we know their track record in terms of collective bargaining rights and their belief in labour rights and workers' rights. We know that they think that the province would be better far off if we were all working for temp agencies under a right-to-work state.

But what about the worker? What about the right to bargain? What about that fundamental right that is being decimated right now with Bill 74? Apparently, the government is choosing winners and losers, and we know that the workers who are currently under the auspices of this collective agreement, under this long-standing collective agreement, who have benefited from years and years of bargaining—they're the ones who are going to be the losers. No one is talking about the losers; no one is talking about the workers in this province. I look forward to hearing, after this is all played through, when it's gone through committee and we've had testimony and we've had various interest groups come and testify before the committee on Bill 74 and the omnibus bill, which I will call it—I look forward to seeing the government promote the benefits of doing this. I look forward to seeing them standing in union halls across this province and saying, "Hey, we took care of EllisDon. We dismantled the bargaining rights for several trade unions. Vote for us. Support us because we know how to take care of the trades." It absolutely, if it hasn't already, should ruin your credibility with the trades and with all labour unions in the province from here into perpetuity, because you can't be trusted on that very fundamental, basic principle: that bargaining rights are sacrosanct. They are something that shouldn't be tampered with. Let it play out at the courts.

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As we've seen, as my colleague from Timmins–James Bay has so eloquently laid out the chronology of how this issue has appeared—and that's an interesting story in and of itself, how this actually appeared to the floor. It was introduced by the member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex. As the labour critic, the day he had introduced it, he had come up to me and said, "I have a bill. It's on the



order paper. I'd like you to take a look at it." I said, "Well, what is it about?" He said, "Well, I don't really know. I'm not quite sure, but I know that it's important and I know that we're going to need to talk about it." No specifics, no idea, no clue—pretty indicative of the fact that he was not the original author of the bill and played very little part in its inception.

Now, we all have a duty here to understand the complexities and ramifications of our bills. We have a duty to present them to our members regardless of if they're going to support them or not, but I can tell you that in my own personal experience—I don't know if the government side had that experience—the originator of the bill had no idea what it was about. I would also contest—I would argue, Speaker—that the majority of the members on the government side still, to this day, have absolutely no idea what the overall impacts of that bill are going to be.

There was a letter sent to the Premier from James St. John, the business manager of the Central Ontario Building Trades, that laid out some very serious red flags for you on the government side to consider. Are any of the members listening to me right now? Did any of you hear it, or listen to it or read it? I see no head nods. I would ask you, urgently, to read that document from James St. John, because it lays out some real potential pitfalls that you might not consider.

There are hundreds of collective agreements that might fall under the umbrella of this decision that are not the original intent, not the ultimate intent of the bill, but you are going to decimate hundreds of agreements that shouldn't even come close to being touched by this bill. That's an unintended consequence, and I think it's your responsibility to make sure that you do your due diligence on this bill.

You have an ability, also, with the motion that we put forward, to pull this thing back, to pull the reins on the bill and to understand that in haste you shouldn't proceed. I don't know if you're going to do that, but at least on our side, on the New Democratic side, we have given you the political space to do that. I would suggest you take that offer.

Again, from the point of view of the worker—sometimes I say, "as a former construction worker," but I'm not. When I leave this place, I could easily go back on the tools, have a great career and work with my colleagues. Once you're a labourer, you're always there. No one has talked about the point of view of the worker.

When this bill goes through, tomorrow or the next day or the next day, whenever it does rear its final ugly head and receive royal assent with the blessing of the Liberals and the Conservatives in this province, the workers will wake up that next morning with a massive amount of uncertainty. They won't know what their benefits are. They won't know what their wages are. They won't know who bargains for them. They won't know who their representatives are.

What is the message that that sends to the broader public? It says that if you have enough money, and you

have enough influence, and you get to the right lobbyist and they open the right doors, the laws in this province where they relate to labour law are flung wide open to you. It's a sad, sad day and a sad state of affairs when we see that that is as much as it takes. The highest bidder wins. I didn't think it actually existed prior to coming here, but now I see it. I see it in plain view, that influence actually gets you what you need, no matter what the ramifications are on the broader public.

I'm looking forward to seeing how the government sells this, in terms of how it benefits our economy and how it benefits our health care system and our education system. Because we all look for bills that have triple the net benefit here, but I only see one beneficiary of Bill 74, and it's EllisDon—a company that has made, again, in excess of \$2 billion in revenue. That's a massive amount. It's so massive, in fact, that I'm certain that they could find a legal solution to this. In fact, they did. On Friday, the Superior Court overturned the OLRB decision and ruled in favour of EllisDon, something that I think was what they were looking for. That's fine. Use the proper mechanisms through our court system. Use the purview of the judiciary to decide whether your case is valid or not. But don't come in here and yield power and influence and benefit your singular motive, which is, ultimately, I would imagine, growth and profit. But who benefits? Well, CEOs, shareholders, but certainly not the workers.

It begs the question, in fact, given the decision at the Superior Court, why the need to double up on the elimination of collective bargaining rights? Why impose a legislative solution? Is it not a slippery-slope precedent that we should not take in this House? In fact, the member from Lanark laid it out quite clearly to his caucus in a communiqué that said, "We shouldn't do this, guys," and voted against the original bill. This is the member from Lanark. Let's all think about the member from Lanark. Not known to be the most progressive person when it comes to labour law, but in fact he saw the writing on the wall: "This is a slippery slope that's going to make us look quite anti-union. It's going to reinforce the narrative that Tim Hudak doesn't care about workers in the province." And now what are you doing? You're joining them. So it's only the member for Lanark who stands on his own, and I applaud him for doing that, for having the guts to say, "This looks pretty terrible, guys."

There are some big corporate donors over here, some big corporate donors over there and, all of a sudden, this bill bubbles to the top of the legislative agenda. It becomes the priority when students can't find work, when emergency rooms are clogged, when infrastructure is crumbling, when part-time precarious work dominates the spectrum of employment. Helping EllisDon profit more and eliminate their rights, abrogate their rights, under bargaining in the province—it bewilders me as a member.

So I hope that my comments here come not—we certainly have been critical of the position. Today you heard each and every one of the members in the New Democratic caucus who stood during question period

criticize the government on this bill singularly; it was the only thing we focused on today. So the need to be critical I think has been expressed.

I want you to actually think about the real pitfalls, the real precedent you are setting here in this province, because it won't be long—that is my final question. At the end of my notes, here—I work by notes—right here, I've got, "Who's next?" Who is next on the list? When will the next massive corporate company come knocking on the door, cheque in hand—

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** PCL.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** It could be anyone.

What you're telling corporate Ontario is, "We're open to the highest bidder. We've got fundraisers galore. Let's see the cheques roll out, because if you want your collective agreement and you want your bargaining rights eliminated, guess what? We've done that before; we can do it again. We're happy to do it and we've got a willing partner in the PCs." That's what you're doing here. It is absolutely a travesty.

It doesn't help the province of Ontario. What could help is to see a government stand up and say, "You know what? We're going to help our domestic companies, our provincial companies, by ensuring that they have a good, willing partner in infrastructure, stable infrastructure funding. We're going to help them by fighting trade agreements like the Comprehensive Economic Trading Agreement with the European Union. We're not going to let massive multinationals come in and eat up even large corporations like EllisDon. We're not going to do that. We understand the value of domestic procurement. We understand the value of domestic partners." We can do that, but what you're saying is, "We'll go right to the worker. We can cut them off at the knees—not a problem."

I look forward to hearing the members of the Liberal caucus, because I know the members of the Tory caucus will proudly say, "We did this for the business. We did it; we helped them out. We helped EllisDon out." They're unabashed. That's why I can't be critical of them; it's a part of their agenda.

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But I look forward to standing in union halls across this province, around this province. I'll go in tandem with my Liberal friends and talk about who actually stands up for the rights of workers in this province and stands up for the rule of law. Who does that? Or who is willing to relinquish the historic rights of workers? Who is willing to sell themselves out? That's what it is, Mr. Speaker. It is one of the biggest sellouts that we've seen.

I caution the members across the way: Don't be sell-outs. Regain that respect; regain that trust. You're making a massive mistake here. Many of you might not know it, but it should be clear to you now, with the information that you have in front of you. You can turn this thing around. We've given you the space to do that, through the motion presented by my friend from Timmins—James Bay. I urge you to take that advice and do it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Other members are right: It is an honour and it is an absolute privilege to rise in this place and to speak about this bill.

I want to dedicate my comments to the memory of my father. My father was a member of the trade union. He was a painter and a decorator and would only take union jobs. My father was also an ardent second-generation Italian member of the New Democratic Party—an active volunteer all his life. I can tell you why he was an active volunteer all his life with the New Democratic Party: because he had lived through Liberal and Conservative governments. He saw what they had done, even back then, vis-à-vis working rights and collective bargaining issues. I remember him talking about the dirty thirties. He was a person who had lived through that, who had seen joblessness, who had seen the lack of rights.

It's worth it, Mr. Speaker, to actually remind folk, as they're watching this, about what unions have done for us and why collective bargaining and unions are so critical. They are critical to our democracy, they are critical to our civil rights, and it can be never be said enough.

We give credit to the unions for weekends. I know my colleagues here don't see too many weekends, but if anybody gets a weekend, it's because of a unionist.

If any woman has women's rights in terms of pay equity in their workplace, I can tell you that's probably a unionized workplace. It's because of a union that they have those rights.

Most people watched, I gather, the last episode of *Breaking Bad* last night. There's a funny little thing going around Facebook and Twitter. It has a picture of Walter White, the character from *Breaking Bad*, and it says, "Canadian *Breaking Bad*." It says, "(1) Treatment paid by health insurance," and (2) "The End," because, honestly, the entire premise of that incredibly popular American television show is that here's an individual who did not have any public health insurance—and he was a teacher. I can tell you that if you've got public health insurance, you can thank Tommy Douglas and the New Democratic Party for that, but you can also thank the unionists, because they fought for it. And if there's any question in anybody's mind that there is only one political party that represents the rights of organized labour, this bill, Bill 74, reaffirms that yet again that is the case, decade after decade after decade.

Why do I say that? Well, even in my short time here, in my seven years here, this is a government, the McGuinty-Wynne government, that voted down anti-scab legislation. We proposed the anti-scab legislation; they voted it down.

This was a government, the McGuinty-Wynne government, that supported, along with the Conservatives, Bill 115, which took away—"unprecedented," the teachers' unions called it—the collective bargaining rights of teachers, many of whom had supported Liberals running in their various ridings. That's just in the last few years. Again, card check certification was won by some but not



by all. This is a government that did not support it for all workers even though we proposed it for all workers.

There's the horrific backdrop to this action that we're speaking to today—an action, may I remind viewers, to support a bill, Bill 74, within an omnibus piece of legislation, that benefits only one company, a company that in 2010 made \$3.39 billion in revenues. The backdrop to this is an Ontario where, since the recession of 2008, we have lost hundreds of thousands of good-paying union jobs and we have replaced them with temporary, part-time contract work.

An incredible study that was put out by the Workers' Action Centre and the Ontario Labour Federation shows that now almost 50% of our jobs in Ontario are precarious. What does that mean? That means that when asked the question, "Will you have your job for sure next year?", they said, "We don't know." That's precarious employment. And this is in a province where, in my father's day—these comments are really said in his honour—on one salary, one union salary as a painter/decorator, he could support a family. One salary: a house downtown, a car in the driveway and, along with some other relatives, a summer cottage.

Imagine now the reality that our children face. On two salaries you can barely afford the down payment to a condo. Why? Because the vast majority of those salaries are not unionized jobs. They're not union: safe, secure, well-paying jobs with benefits. They're precarious employment. That's the big difference. The emptying out of the middle class, the fact that Canada increasingly is seeing the wealthy get wealthier and the poor get poorer and the middle class emptying out, is exactly because we do not have more unionized jobs. That's directly responsible for that. If you go to a social democratic country—and my husband and I have—if you go to Sweden, where there's an 85% unionization rate—85%; just imagine that for a moment—you don't have poverty. Poverty is a curable disease. The cure for it is a good job and a good house; a place to live and a place to work. That's a cure for poverty. Really, they don't have it there, and in most of the Scandinavian countries you don't see it the way you do here because people have housing and because they have work and because that work is unionized work. It's work that has a good salary, and it has good benefits.

Of course, concomitantly, because of the high unionized rate in those countries, what do you see also? You also see better civil rights, you see pharmacare, you see dental care, you see health care and you see child care, Mr. Speaker. Imagine: a jurisdiction that actually provided child care to its women workers—good child care, not the kind of child care we see here in Ontario. Much of it is deplorable: unsupervised, unlicensed; the only child care you can get. You see, even child care is a union issue—even child care.

When you look at poverty, when you look at the incredible poverty rates and how much it costs us—I was just looking this up today: about \$10 billion to \$13 billion a year. That's what poverty costs in the province of Ontario: \$10 billion to \$13 billion a year. People say,

"That's counterintuitive. How can it cost us money?" I'll tell you. It costs us money in health because, as we all know, poverty is a social determinant of health. It costs us money in the criminal justice system because people who are marginalized spend more time in and out of that system. It costs us more money, especially child poverty, in terms of long-range aspects. Women's poverty costs us money too, because women without good jobs cost the system. Poverty costs us; the government knows that. We know that. We know it costs less to put somebody in a hotel than in a shelter. We know these things. Why do we not have the political will to do something about it? I'll tell you. We don't have the political will to do something about it because of the influences upon our current government. That's what I'll talk to next.

#### 1510

When we look at this programming motion and we keep in mind people like my father, people who used to have a good union job and may not anymore, and are certainly looking at whatever's left being under threat with this legislation, we'll see an omnibus motion that has a few things in it. It has a Skin Cancer Prevention Act, the anti-tanning bed act brought in by the member from Nickel Belt that everybody agrees with. It has the Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act (Spousal Exception), which was brought in by a Progressive Conservative. Everybody agrees with it. It has the Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act, Bill 55, which everybody agrees with. It has Bill 36, the Local Food Act, which everybody agrees with. It has the Wireless Services Agreements Act, which although like the Local Food Act, doesn't do much, everybody agrees with. It has the carbon monoxide safety act, introduced by a Progressive Conservative, I think many, many times. Everybody agrees with that too. The Registered Human Resources Professionals Act, a bill, really, to deal with regulation—everybody agrees with it. And then, in the midst of it all—in the midst of universal legislative agreement, all parties agreeing—you have, voilà, Bill 74, the Fairness and Competitiveness in Ontario's Construction Industry Act. A very nice title—lots of very bad things are done under very nice titles—the bill for EllisDon.

This morning our leader, Andrea Horwath, moved a very simple motion. She moved a motion that said just take that bill out; just take that one bill out. Now, imagine. What's the problem? If there's so much contention, if the Superior Court ruled on Friday that EllisDon could get what it wants and tear up its collective agreement, why is this bill so critical? The Liberals voted no. They did not abstain; they voted no, "We will not take this bill out." One has to ask, "What's the motivation for the Premier, Kathleen Wynne, and the Liberal Party to be so gung-ho that they're willing to go to the wall for this one bill?"

I would direct people's attention to Adam Radwanski's article in the Globe. It's pretty specific; it's pretty to the point. He mentions some numbers: \$125,000 donated to the Liberal Party by EllisDon; \$32,000 to the Conserva-

tive Party from EllisDon. If I was in the Conservative Party, I might feel a little slighted by that, maybe; they're supporting the bill too. But there you go. He mentions other things too. He mentions meetings with lobbyists, some of which you've heard from my colleagues; he mentions that. He pretty well draws a picture of why we're focused on this bill.

I would appeal to my friends across the aisle in the Liberal Party who have bills of their own that could have made it into this programming motion but were slapped across the face by supporting a Conservative-introduced bill to support EllisDon while ignoring their own members' private members' bills. Let's point to one in particular: the one put forward by the member from Niagara Falls, who resigned recently—perhaps that was part of it—the grandparents' bill. He's introduced this bill at least three to four times since I've been in the House. That's not in here.

There are other bills. You know, I can think of the member from—where is he from?—Scarborough Southwest. He introduced a very compassionate bill for animal rights. That's not in here. They slapped him across the face too. We could go on. For every member in the backbenches over there, there is a private member's bill put forward by a Liberal Party member that got ignored. They ignored their own to work for EllisDon. Truly, they're working for EllisDon with this bill. This is a shocking—talk about abrogation of union rights—use of this Legislature.

Again, my father, a hard-working individual like many hard-working unionists and non-unionists who wish they would be unionists—my kids wish they had union jobs. Most of our kids wish they had union jobs—those who are looking for jobs, and by the way, that's a lot of kids; 17% of our youth are unemployed right now. We're right there with the Rust Belt states in terms of employment for our youth, and that's why we pushed to get money towards that in the budget. Most of these folk would love to have union jobs, and yet we are attacking collective agreements in union jobs, after all that I've just said. Are we really working in the direction of the right-to-work states? That was mentioned, and I think there's some validity in that. Think about it. I was asking how many right-to-work states there are. Right-to-work, by the way, is a really Orwellian way of saying, "right to work for less money; right to work for slightly over minimum wage; right not to have collective agreements; right not to be protected by a union." That's the rights of the right-to-work states.

Yet we're seeing this government, with Bill 115, with the anti-scab legislation that we proposed that they voted down and now with Bill 74, heading in that direction. And here we see, of course, the meeting of minds, Liberals and Conservatives acting together and really, again going back to my father, it's no different than it was in the 1920s, the 1930s, the 1940s, the 1950s, the 1960s, the 1970s. I remember my father talking about Trudeau 1.0, the first Trudeau. He was no hero in my household, I'll tell you, because when my father was out on strike, guess

what the first Trudeau said to him? I can't even repeat it here; it's an expletive. That's what he said, and he's famous for saying it. That was the first Trudeau, who also, by the way, took away all of our civil liberties with another bill—we won't get away from the topic at hand. That was the Liberals back then; that was the height of Liberalism. That was the height of their so-called glory days under Trudeau.

So here we have again—this is not an aberration for my friends in the Liberal Party; this is who they are. This is the very DNA of the Liberal Party. This is what they stand for. They stand for, like the Progressive Conservative Party, big business. That's what they stand for. They don't even stand for small business; they stand for big business.

Here we have the most graphic example of that that one could possibly ever see, a bill that has trumped even their own backbench members' private members' bills. It has trumped all sorts of things that they could focus on in this House. We won't even begin to imagine what kind of bills could have been brought forward. It trumps it all. It trumps their own self-interest in many ways. It trumps everything because who they really represent are the forces of big business. That's the reality, and in that, they share something with the Conservatives. I will give a nod to the Conservatives, by the way, and I posted this when Tim Hudak was reaffirmed as leader. I said, "You know, they have principles in the Progressive Conservative Party. They're all wrong, but they have them. They have principles. They're all wrong, but they've got them."

But my Liberal friends, what are their principles? I don't know. But I can tell you one of them, the critical one truly, is to get re-elected. That's the critical principle. That's the one consistent operational policy. When you look at their economic policies, when you look at what they actually do, here is a classic example: Bill 74 tucked neatly into a programming motion of other bills that we all agree on that could have been sent through the House very, very speedily and, as my friend the House leader, the member from Timmins—James Bay, says, "a bill to shut down debate of the Conservative Party by the Conservative Party." There is no other logic to this than that.

1520

Just in the last minute and a bit, I'll say I don't understand the support. If anything that I've said is wrong, contradict me, for sure. Stand up, say it and vote for a motion. Just take Bill 74 out of the programming motion, and I'll happily eat my words. Just do it; do it by the end of the afternoon. We still have a few hours left. There are still a few speakers left.

But if I'm actually right, and my father was right before him, and other workers before them, that this is just representative of who the Liberal Party really is, then stay the course, my friends. Again, just a shout-out to all those unionized workers, to all those who are organizing as we speak, to my father and his whole generation that really paid for—in many ways, with their lives—the right of organized labour and collective bargaining. This is one of those moments in this Legislature in Ontario when,



again, the rubber hits the road and we see who truly is on your side, who truly stands up for workers' rights and who doesn't.

Again, to all of you out there who try to make the world a better place and try to make workplaces better, and to all of those who fought for civil rights as part of union rights: Thank you, thank you, thank you. Hopefully they'll remove Bill 74 from the programming motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnett):** Further debate?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I appreciate the opportunity, and I have to say I appreciate the speeches given by my colleagues, the member for Timmins-James Bay, the member for Essex and the member for Parkdale-High Park. I think they put the argument very, very well. They put it extremely well. But, Speaker, I think we have to go back and look at what we are dealing with here. What is the substance before us?

We are seeing a programming motion come forward. We can debate whether or not a programming motion is appropriate. I think my colleagues have said—and they've said it very well—that most of the bills that are before us are ones that we can work through. We don't need to talk them to death. We need to debate them and move on with them. The core, the heart, of what we're dealing with today is the resolution—Bill 74, that would take an agreement, a contract between workers and employers, turn it inside out, hand everything over to the employer, and for those who work for a living, who don't own a corporation, say, "You're out of luck. Forget it."

I've watched this government deal with big corporations in the course of the gas plant scandal, and I have to tell you that if they don't get along with them, they try to do everything they can to make them happy, to the extent of spending hundreds of millions of dollars out of your pocket, your pocket and your pocket to make sure that politically they're looked after—the Liberals are looked after—and that the corporations are looked after. But when it comes to people who are trying to pay a mortgage, trying to make sure that there's food on the table and trying to make sure that their households are in order, and that is the extent of their empire, then their rights are expendable; their contracts can be set aside; their contracts can be legally ripped up.

This initiative on the part of the Liberal government is a prime piece of evidence that, in Liberal Ontario today, there is one law for the well-connected and one law for everyone else. God help you if you're part of the "everyone else," because this government is not going to help you. It is not going to help you.

Ever since this government—let us say, ever since the Dalton McGuinty regime came apart and a new regime arose within the Liberal Party, we have been told that this is a group vastly different from everything that came before, that these Liberals wouldn't follow the Dalton McGuinty path. But I have to say to you, Speaker, there's no question at all for anyone who reads the legislation before us, who understands what's at play, that in fact everything that happened with Bill 115, creating pande-

monium and chaos in our education system—everything that was unfair in that legislation is being reproduced right here today. In fact, there is a profound continuity in Liberal policy, and that continuity again is that the well-connected are looked after and everyone else is going to have to look after themselves, and good luck to them.

This piece of legislation is a sign of Liberals who have become Conservatives in a hurry. They want to move forward an anti-labour agenda that will undermine decades of struggles, decades of fights by ordinary Ontarians to give themselves some protection in this economy, some protection in this society. Frankly, Speaker, it's indefensible.

I'm not sure that those who are just tuning in now, who are flipping through channels, who are listening to an audio broadcast, understand fully how tawdry this matter is that's before us. My colleague from Timmins-James Bay earlier read excerpts from the news bulletin Inside Queen's Park, and frankly, they deserve to be read again into the record.

People may well know that the Conservatives have had a non-co-operation policy with the Liberals this past year, which seems to have dashed itself on the rocks. After their last policy conference, Mr. Hudak came back in a more contrite mode, possibly; possibly came back understanding that he simply had to make some deals, and there was a beautiful deal that appealed to his principles and to Liberal interests.

The Premier came with a bundle of bills that are before us now. I'll read now the quote from Inside Queen's Park: "Hudak's bundle of generally acceptable bills on local food, electric heater doorstep sales restrictions, tanning beds and the like included one which struck Inside Queen's Park as highly controversial: PC Monte McNaughton's Bill 74, to invalidate recognition of the building trades by deep-pocketed contracting giant EllisDon. Ex-PC labour critic Randy Hillier certainly regarded it as controversial, minuted his caucus colleagues accordingly and expressed alarm...." I will leave out the bit that was quoted by my colleague that disturbed you, Speaker, and I'll read on to the parts that can be read in public, in this chamber. "The publicity on this matter was not welcomed by his leader and right after the defenestration of Peter Shurman, Hillier was fired as PC labour critic.

"Looking back at the legislative course of the EllisDon bill, it is indeed 'astounding' ... that this Tory private member's bill got through second reading back on June 6 with backing from twice as many Liberals as PCs. Votes from the 22 Libs included 10 cast by ministers." Ministers, as you well know, Speaker, are not free agents in these matters. There's a certain amount of party discipline that moves them in place. "Votes against revoking the EllisDon collective agreement were cast by 15 NDP MPPs and Hillier."

Speaker, Inside Queen's Park goes on to do some analysis of these amazing vote splits, rarely seen in this place. They say, "Of course, the absence of so many PCs and the equally surprising presence of a whole bunch of

Libs did not just happen. Inside Queen's Park has learned that it was John Duffy of StrategyCorp, working as the government relations consultant to EllisDon, who devised a classic back-scratching scheme to get it through. The PCs would undertake the sponsorship of Bill 74 to relieve the Libs"—hard done by—"of the embarrassment of taking the lead on another contract-stripping measure, worse even than Bill 115. And enough of the Libs would take part in the vote to ensure its passage." Well, Speaker, that's a very substantial thing to say about the way the government has been operating.

1530

My colleagues have had the opportunity to ask questions. They have had the opportunity to ask questions, and I will read out a few of their questions to the Premier and some of the Premier's response, which in itself has been quite instructive.

September 25, Mr. Gilles Bisson: "My question is to the Premier...."

"Can the Premier tell us how many people she's met with who are concerned about the plight of EllisDon Corp?"

The Premier's response: She turned it to the Minister of Labour. Now, that's quite intriguing. The Premier didn't want to answer that question.

Mr. Bisson, persistent, bulldog-like in his tenacity—he could have been from East York—went on: "Well, the question was to the Premier, and it was a pretty simple one—'Can you tell us who has been lobbying you to get this piece of legislation passed?'"

Again, it was referred, to Mr. Naqvi, the Minister of Labour.

Now, Mr. Bisson, not discouraged, ever hopeful that a question might make an appearance and an answer might follow that question, said: "The only thing that appears to be growing is the coffers of the Liberal and Tory parties...."

"I'm going to ask you the question again. Can the Premier explain to us how you end up putting this piece of legislation as a priority and how and who has lobbied you?"

It was referred again to the Minister of Labour.

Speaker, sometimes a question unanswered speaks far more loudly than any answer that can be given. But nonetheless, we persisted, because the questions have to be asked, right? The questions have to be asked.

On September 26, Andrea Horwath gets up and says, "Speaker, yesterday New Democrats asked the Premier who she had met with regarding Bill 74, a bill to help one of the Liberals' biggest donors. We didn't get an answer to that question, so can the Premier tell us today who has been lobbying her to support this bill?"

The Honourable Kathleen Wynne: "Again, I will just say that there is a range of bills as part of this programming motion, Mr. Speaker."

Now, I may not be the most subtle reader—it may be that some nuance escapes me—but to tell you the truth, the Premier is avoiding that question.

"We need to have a full discussion of it, so we need to move it ahead. That's what the programming motion is about."

Again, Andrea Horwath asked the Premier, will she tell us who she has been meeting with? And again the Premier answers, "I think it would be very helpful for us to be able to get these pieces of legislation—there's a full range of them—to the next stage." Speaker, she would not answer that question.

Even on a third try, the most we could get was: "The reality is that everyone in this House meets with people from across the business and labour spectrum." In other words, she wasn't going to answer that.

This morning, Andrea Horwath again rose in her place to ask: "My next question is also for the Premier. Can the Premier tell us whether she or her staff discussed the EllisDon bill with the company or anyone working on behalf of that company in the last six months?"

The answer from the Premier: "Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure of the scope of the leader of the third party's question."

Well, I'll say to you, Speaker, that it's a pretty straightforward question: "Have you been meeting with EllisDon or their representatives?"

Andrea Horwath, undeterred, goes on: "Published reports indicate that the bill was crafted by lobbyists at StrategyCorp.... Can the Premier confirm or deny that report?"

The Premier's response: "Mr. Speaker, I can't even follow the convolutions of that question." I didn't think it was that complicated. I heard it this morning. I thought it was pretty straightforward.

And then Mr. Bisson had a chance again this morning to say, "My question is to the Premier. Premier, John Duffy is a lobbyist with StrategyCorp, that is registered to work on behalf of EllisDon. Mr. Duffy touts his close relationship with you on the StrategyCorp website, noting that he worked with you ... on the Premier's leadership campaign last winter."

"Has the Premier met with Mr. Duffy, and if so, did she discuss this bill?"

The whole matter was referred, then, to Mr. John Milloy.

Now, I have to say I have a lot of respect for Mr. Milloy. He is a very skilled parliamentarian. He gets one of the toughest tasks in this Legislature. When the Premier or anyone else doesn't want to answer a question, it is turned over to Mr. Milloy to stuff it into a little black bag and dispose of it under his desk. John Milloy is where questions go to die. That's his job. So, Speaker, every time the Premier refers a question to John Milloy, that says that question is *persona non grata*, or question non grata, and has to go.

Back in the day, when the Soviet Union ruled a good part of the world and many people couldn't get real information out of it, people watched the lineup at Lenin's tomb on May Day to see who was close to the leader and who was far away, and they derived clues. They were called Kremlinologists; they would take their analysis.



We, Speaker, have become Liberalologists. We watch to see where questions are sent. Frankly, the ongoing non-answer to a question is an indication of an awful lot of smoke. If you have enough smoke, you can cover very big fires.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Or elect a Pope.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Or, it has been said, I can elect a Pope as well.

But frankly, Speaker, we have a situation of multiple non-answers by a Premier to very straightforward questions. I think, at some point, those non-answers are going to have to be addressed by this Premier.

It looks to me that this government is clearing the decks for further unfriendly-to-working-people legislation in this new grand alliance of the PCs and the Liberals. Does it mean that the legislation that's going to bring in a framework for negotiations in the education sector is going to have very draconian, non-teacher-, non-education-worker-friendly elements? It could well be that.

Could it be that the Liberals are preparing to work with the PCs on changing labour arbitration, one of their holy grails? Well, now that you have an alliance of PCs and Liberals to bring in legislation to tear up contracts and understandings from 1958—you had them working together last year on Bill 115 to cause chaos in the education system—why would they stop now? They're just getting warmed up. They're putting things through at an incredible pace so that this key piece of legislation—which sets back contract respect in the construction sector by decades—can go forward.

This government has an opportunity to just take Bill 74 out of their agreement. We heard this morning that in their opinion, the courts have thrown it all out—thrown out the legal protection for the workers. That being the case, what's the point in continuing with the agony? Go now; get rid of it. But if, in fact, you don't believe that's the case—maybe that is where the Liberals are at—then they will continue to pursue this approach, this legislation that undermines people's contractual rights in this society.

1540

We have been through roughly three decades of growing inequality here in Ontario, and that growing inequality has meant less opportunity for our young people. That growing inequality has meant a weakness in our economy that is corrected by people borrowing more than they can afford to borrow. It has been corrected by credit schemes that put people in permanent debt. It has meant young people borrowing far more than they can afford to borrow for an education, which they hope will be the ticket to a decent job. That inequality is being facilitated by this bill, because, in fact—let's face it—in this society, people have to be able to protect themselves and look after themselves in a very tough, competitive environment where organizations, individuals and corporations jostle for position. When working people aren't organized, don't have the ability collectively to say, "This is what we need. This is what we will do if we are denied a fair treatment or contract"—if they're denied

that, then their standard of living drops. This bill is part of that ongoing process of rolling back what it took decades to put in place.

The Liberals have said this was settled by the courts. They have said all along that they're friends of labour. Prove that they are. Prove me wrong when I say I don't see that they're friends of transparency or working people, that in fact, with this bill, they've thrown both of those things away.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Usually I get up and I say it's a pleasure to stand up and speak about this particular bill. But today, actually, I just want to put a little context into the framework of why we're here. It is the year 2013. This province has a major issue with youth unemployment. We have great inconsistencies in our health care system. Our public education system needs a serious, serious rethink on how we are delivering public education skills to this generation.

In fact, yesterday I was at the Equinox Summit: Learning 2030 in Waterloo. It's hosted by the Waterloo Global Science Initiative, the Perimeter Institute and the University of Waterloo. They are spending the next week talking about how to improve and strengthen the education system for those children who are being born today and what that system is going to look like in 2030. It's honourable work, what they are doing. It is honourable work.

I think that if we take a step back as we discuss the origins of this particular private member's bill and how we actually got to this place in the history of this province, if you, as an individual MPP, are walking through the neighbourhoods, your constituencies, you're meeting with people, you're knocking on doors, as I do on Fridays, if you actually were to hear from somebody at the door—you know, you knock on the door, and they say to you, "What are you going to do about this EllisDon travesty? This is just a great injustice to the entire province." You know what? If you heard it, it was in your dreams, because there is no way that the people in this province think that this issue for this one company is a priority in their lives.

In fact, what I hear when I meet with—just last week—the Ontario Dental Association, the health care sector, presidents of universities, chairs of school boards, is that they actually want us to stay focused on the real things that matter to them. What I hear, loud and clear, is a great concern of the growing gap between the rich and poor. So the petitions that they've asked me to put forward on their behalf have to do with the community start-up fund and looking at the minimum wage. What do we get on the minimum wage from this government? We get another panel. We get more conversation. We get more discussion about where this minimum wage is going to go, as if it hasn't been studied already all to death.

Affordable transit: That's a huge issue. People want to get from Kitchener—Waterloo to Toronto. They want to do it fast. They don't want to get on a two-hour GO train

that sometimes is there and sometimes is not. They're fighting for that; they're actually fighting for that. So there's no great sense of outrage on this one particular issue.

So sometimes it is difficult to get up and rally behind this. But I think that, as I was thinking about what I would say here in this House today—would we really be here, would we be having this debate, would we be having this conversation, if there were limits to campaign donations? I think it is a surprise to a lot of people, actually. As this story will unravel and it will get told through various social media and to some of the people who are watching, they will be surprised that this one particular company gave over \$100,000 to the Liberals, and they also gave \$32,000 to the PCs, and it continues. It undermines, continually, the confidence that people have in this House that we actually come here to work for the people who elected us. I think this actually should be a huge concern to all of us.

In the grand scheme of issues around accessibility for those with disabilities, around mental health reform, around education and health care and the economy and jobs—and I'm going to talk about youth unemployment in a second—this does not fit in. It does not fit in to the list of priorities for the people of this province. It actually makes people angry when they hear that this is our key issue. We're going to spend the entire day talking about undermining and changing a collective agreement for one company. It should never happen in this place. This place is supposed to be for legislation which moves the agenda forward for the people of this province, not just for the interests of one company and some lobbyists who are clearly getting paid a lot of money to make us stand here and talk about this issue. It's outrageous on so many levels.

I'm going to take exception to the minister from Kitchener Centre, my colleague, who says that, you know—he was mad today that we are making it such an issue that this particular private member's bill has been a programmed motion. The programming motion, for those at home, forces us to deal with this issue in a timely manner, as if it were an important issue, as if it mattered to the people of this province. It forces us to fast-track it. It forces us to push this private member's bill—which rarely ever become law—to the forefront, to the front of the line.

I think that I take great issue, because we did program the Financial Accountability Office, because that office deserved to be fast-tracked. That office, that government bill which we negotiated in the last budget session, needed attention immediately. It deserved our attention. It should have actually happened years and years ago, because then we wouldn't have our committees all tied up with scandal after scandal, trying to find the truth on everything from eHealth to Ornge to gas plants. Quite honestly, that financial accountability is absolutely needed on several levels.

I just want to refresh the debate somewhat. The Ontario Labour Relations Board had given EllisDon two

years to find a legislative solution to the OLRB ruling on the 1958 master agreement with the Building and Construction Trades Council of Sarnia. Bill 74 is the so-called solution. It has been cooked up on some napkin someplace; somehow the PCs have arranged that they will deliver this solution, and somehow the Liberals have found it in their hearts to already say that they will support it.

And yet I do sense from the Liberal benches that they are not altogether comfortable with it, because we just had a not altogether dissimilar motion that came forward two weeks ago on Bill 73, where we said we should not be negotiating collective agreements on the floor of the Legislature. I know the member from Beaches—East York would completely agree with me as he feeds chocolate to the pages. Just two weeks ago, the Liberals said, oh, "You know what? We trust the Ontario Labour Relations Board. It's not broken," and, "Collective agreements? We value them. They are some of our core principles." And yet here we are talking about amending and undermining a collective agreement process again, not two weeks later in this House. I tell you, it does not sit well with the people of this province because they understand the games that are being played and they are getting angry with the games that are being played, as am I.

1550

When I reflect back on my one year in this seat in this House and I think about the important work that we have been able to accomplish, I think the Financial Accountability Office is one of the key pieces because it underpinned the entire negotiations around the 2013 budget. It underpinned the relationship that we tried to build in this House to put the priorities of people first, like expanding home care.

I was just at a poverty reduction meeting on Friday and I just learned that the CCAC received \$7 million to come in line with that five-day home care guarantee. That's a good thing; that's a worthwhile endeavour to fight for, because in Kitchener-Waterloo it was a 63-day wait-list. With \$7 million, as negotiated through this last budget, it will be five days. That's the kind of work we should be doing.

The youth unemployment stats have just come out; they came out on Friday in a report from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives in Ontario. This is an excellent report. If you are a social researcher like myself and my colleague from London West, you believe that research should inform public policy. Facts should come into play, as we delve into the problems that are facing the province of Ontario. So when you look at this report, it's a pretty dire report. It tells the truth of the employment situation for youth in the province of Ontario. When we did our jobs round tables last year after the House was prorogued—again for partisan, hubris, self-serving intentions—at least we were able to accomplish some good during that time period and we were able to talk to the youth in this province. They said they can't even get in the door. They couldn't even get in the door. They couldn't get a job. So we came forward with our



plan to create subsidies so that employers could hire youth on a fixed-term basis. It actually gets them in the door. It gets them that experiential learning opportunity. It provides them an opportunity to actually connect with employers, because often that connection just doesn't happen. The doors just don't open.

I think that just the basic stats that are contained within—we have the highest unemployment rates for youth in the country. You can move the numbers around; you can say 15% to 20%, or 16% to 21%, or 15% to 24%, but the facts do not lie. The truth of the matter is that areas like Windsor and Thunder Bay and Barrie and Hamilton and St. Catharines and Kingston and Ottawa-Gatineau and Guelph—all of these jurisdictions within our province are fighting to find good jobs. I feel very fortunate that the rate of unemployment in my riding is 13.1% versus the average of 15% or 16%, so we're actually doing better. But in what world would 13% unemployment for youth be an acceptable level of employment?

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** And try 17% up in the north—yes.

So these students are going through the education system. They are pursuing their college or university degrees. They spend a lot of money, because we also have some of the highest post-secondary rates in the country. They invest their time. They invest their energy. They hook their future and their hope of their future to education, and in this province it simply is not paying off. That was one of the reasons that we did negotiate a youth employment plan in the last budget. We have a home care plan. We tried to address affordability matters. Destroying a collective agreement for one company: On a scale of one to 10, it's in the minus area. But auto insurance: We're still trying to get the real numbers, and this was an amazing experience for me during finance to ask the finance minister a straightforward question on ROE: "Is this the real number? Are these the numbers that you're working with?" And, quite honestly, just to not be able to get an answer at finance committee. That should be a place where accountability comes into play. But we do have hope, in that, now that the Financial Accountability Office is in process and soon we'll have a person in that place, I as an individual member can, in turn, actually seek out knowledge. As I said, I very strongly believe that knowledge should inform public policy.

We hear a lot of talk from the government, and we're asked to indulge in conversation after conversation, about the real issues that are facing Ontarians. I'm sure the Premier has had another photo op today to boost her rural credibility, and Liberals love to talk about what they've done for the economy and how they're investing in this and investing in that. What it boils down to, Mr. Speaker, is just talk. The government's real priority, along with their coalition partners in the so-called official opposition, is moving heaven and earth to ensure their deep-pocketed donors and well-heeled insiders get what they want.

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** You know, what's really interesting is that they take such offence at being couched in the same terms. And yet, after two years of the PCs not accomplishing anything—of saying no to budgets before you even read them and ridiculing this side of the House for actually negotiating some results on child care, on education, on health care—after all of that, now you are negotiating with them. All that propping-up talk—

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** We're not going to drop down to the same level you dropped down to, because I think the level of debate in this House needs to—

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Point of order, the member for Durham.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I find it completely [*inaudible*] defaming the opposition. Stick to the script they gave you to read. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):**—find that's a point of order. I return to the member for Kitchener-Waterloo.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Thank you. There is no script over here, and thank you for that classy interjection.

I think we do need to talk about the politics of this bill. There's clearly a lot at play. In the overall big picture of why we are talking about Bill 74 in this context today, it is really serious. This debate, in and of itself, is taking us away from the issues we should be discussing. We've taken a lot of steps backward in the last year, year and a half. Certainly, when prorogation happened, we in the opposition could agree that that was a great abuse of power.

I really am hopeful that Bill 24, my private member's bill, does come to the floor—it was actually mentioned in a recent document—because it should be at finance committee. Do you know why it should be at finance committee? Because when this House got prorogued, we lost the progress that we'd made on over 100 pieces of legislation, and that cost money. You can cost it out.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** You're propping them up now. You can cost it out, and you set us back.

Even more importantly, when this House was prorogued, there was a huge lack of confidence in the work that was happening here. For the economy, and for the lack of confidence that translates to, honestly, it took us back. I think if we could bring Bill 24 back to the finance committee and we could cost it out—I know the Liberals want to get to the bottom of that issue; they want to make sure that, moving forward, no government can abuse the power of prorogation like the former Premier has done.

On the whole, we have a question of integrity here, in that you have a company that is lobbying and donating to both the parties. You have a company that has basically made the case and struck a deal to ensure that this bill comes to the floor. I think that in the grand scheme of things, this is—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I don't need your help, thank you.

I would caution the member for Kitchener–Waterloo that it is completely outside the rules of this House—breaking the rules of the House—to ascribe motive, and I would ask her to be very careful with her language.

I recognize again the member for Kitchener–Waterloo.  
**1600**

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** The issue, though, is that we do not have a very clear policy in this House on political donations. The federal government has addressed this by way of limiting or preventing corporate donations. I think that this is an issue, and our leader, Andrea Horwath, has said that this is an important policy issue that needs to be discussed. You can't blame me because the optics are what they are. I believe that in this place each and every one of us has a responsibility to bring the real issues of the people of this province to the fore. I will stand by my comments that negotiating or renegotiating a collective agreement on the part of one company does not fit into that responsibility. The fact that it has been fast-tracked won't surprise you.

I fully support a programming motion for the Financial Accountability Officer and I was pleased that we were able to get that done. I was pleased to watch the LG actually sign it and get royal assent, and there was lots of fanfare and what have you.

But in this place, our job is to stay focused on the priorities of people. The priorities of this one individual company do not fit into that mix, and it should not surprise you. The priorities that we've brought forward around health care, around jobs, around affordability and accountability, those are our priorities on this side of the House. Quite honestly, I'm just disappointed that we have to spend a whole day discussing this one particular bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I just wanted to share a few quick words with everyone. When I was back home, touring from one end of my riding to the other over the course of the weekend, I had an opportunity to talk to several individuals. The number of times that the EllisDon bill came up over the course of the weekend was zero. Not one time did somebody rush to grab me by the arm and say, "Listen, I've got to have a private discussion with you, Mike. This EllisDon bill is a priority for us here in Echo Bay or Mindemoya or Espanola. We've really got to resolve this one issue, Mike, because here in Elliot Lake that's the most important thing that we need to talk about."

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I'll put a busload on the Chi-Cheemaun.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Yes, the Chi-Cheemaun—you know what? That's a good point, and I'm really glad you brought that up. When you do have a priority and where you are working on behalf of Ontarians, the work, once you put your minds to it, put the partisanship aside and where the donators aren't in that same room, where three

individuals—and I'm glad the Minister of Northern Development and Mines is here and also my friend Bill Walker—sorry, the member from—

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Without a shadow of a doubt.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Without a shadow of a doubt. I'm glad that he's here, because we did accomplish together, all three of us, some really good work there. That's what it means when you deal with the priorities of people in this province: You can actually accomplish something really good. That's where the priority is, where Ontarians are the priority and not just a single entity, not just a single company.

From where I sit here—I've said this many times—I enjoy listening to the experienced debaters in this room. Some MPPs have such a colourful way of bringing their points across—not all of them I agree with, I have to say, but some of them are very colourful in regard to the debate. But what I've noticed today is something that I'm not very proud of from where I sit. I see a lot of faces that are down in their desks. I see a lot of individuals who are not participating in the debate. I see a lot of individuals who are silent. And that, to me, speaks a lot about how important this issue is to Ontarians. Because when some of us are not speaking to the issue, a lot of us are being affected by it, and that really concerns me. What really concerns me is the outcome and the potential impact that this particular bill might have, not only on us in this room, because we're the ones who are going to have to live with the decision. I know I'm making the right decision from where I sit, but can you say that from where you're sitting in this House? Because a lot of you have very low-hung heads right now.

I, myself, like the member from Timmins–James Bay, tend to speak off the cuff most of the time. Sometimes it gets me into problems, but most of the time I try and write it down so I don't get into problems. So I'm going to rely on some of my prepared notes that I have made in order to talk about this bill.

Before I do that, I think it's important for us to understand what a bargaining process is. I come from a forestry background. I came from an environment where there wasn't a union, where there was no agreement, where I didn't have to report to or I didn't have to worry about co-workers. Basically, I was on my own. For the longest time, as long as things were good for me, that was fine. As long as things weren't affecting my family, that was fine. But, you know, lo and behold I had to step up. I had to really defend my values because not only were my moral values being affected; so were the ones of my co-workers.

That's what's so important about collective bargaining rights. Whether it was done 50 years ago—and thank God it was started 50 years ago, if not longer than that—where we had the ability to sit down and have a chat and negotiate an agreement. But the important part there is where you had that opportunity to sit down and build a relationship between your employer and yourself; where



you had that opportunity to sit down and talk—and not only what was best for the company, because you had that opportunity to hear what they had to say, but you had that opportunity to engage. You were not only building your membership; you were building the industry; you were building the future. Thank God that we had a lot of unions who were there who stood up year after year for collective bargaining rights for individuals across this province—that we’re actually having this debate today.

What we’re going to do—because one individual company feels that they are not at an advantage; it’s costly for them with the labour force that they have—is, we’re going to look at cutting it on the backs of the individuals who actually built that company. That’s what we’re doing here. That decision is not only going to affect EllisDon; it’s going to affect a lot more throughout this province. That’s what we’re doing here today.

Again, I look around this room and I see a lot of hung heads and I don’t see people who are very proud or engaged in this conversation. I’m not going to mention any names, but I’ve stepped out of this room and often I’ve talked to individuals on both sides of this House, and they’ve commented to our MPPs who are actually debating this bill here today in regard to the positions that they brought forward. But I don’t hear them and I don’t see them in this room. That’s too bad, Mr. Speaker, because we need to hear those voices, whether you’re for it or against it. That’s what a democracy is: where you can sit down and actually engage in a debate.

Bill 74 is a private member’s bill brought forward by a Conservative member, and it’s supported by the Liberals. This particular bill aims to nullify the labour agreement between the building trade unions and a single company called EllisGod—I’m sorry; it should be EllisDon. But with the amount of power that’s being put into this one bill, we might as well be calling it the EllisGod bill.

What does this bill do? It targets agreements which compel EllisDon to employ only unionized construction workers so that it can slash labour costs and basically stick it to the building trades and their workers and their labour groups.

The bill has even drawn criticism from a Conservative MPP, and I know, from my friends across the way, Liberal individuals, who have also mentioned those words to me.

EllisDon signed this agreement with its workers, and has an extremely skilled, hard-working labour force which puts them in a competitive nature. You have to remember the history of having built those negotiations, having built that relationship with your employer, where individuals are committed to moving.

I’m a proud individual. I like to go to work. I want to work in a safe environment. But you have to sit down and negotiate those principles in your collective agreements, and you have to get your employers to sit at the table and build that relationship so there is a trust between the two individuals and those discussions that are being held within that working environment. It’s not an easy one. It’s definitely not an easy one, but you have to

be engaged, something that—I look around this room, and we’re not being engaged. There is only one discussion that is being held, and that’s from our party here today.

**1610**

We are here today, and possibly over the next few days, to debate this bill, but we feel that a bill that affects one company shouldn’t be given special treatment just because the company donates money to this government. This bill isn’t about the broad construction industry. This is a bill that’s custom-made for one company that happens to be a major donor to the Liberal and PC parties. We don’t think that’s right.

Our priorities are to make life more affordable for all Ontarians, not just one corporation. I refer to an earlier bill that I had presented, where I relied on the official opposition to support us in bringing this bill forward—it was moved into committee in this House—which was removing the HST on the home heating costs. That was one of the first ventures that I did as an MPP. We worked together. We made this a possibility for Ontarians. However, this Liberal government did not support it. Or, sorry, this Liberal government who is giving us the perception that this present bill that we’re dealing with—although a Conservative private member’s bill—

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It’s really a Liberal bill.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Yes, a Liberal bill is what it is. They’re giving the perception that they are not the ones who are bringing it forward, that they’re working with the Conservative Party to bring it forward. But when you look at it, and once you clear all the smoke and once you try and deal with what that perception is, we all know where this bill is coming from. They’re the ones who are going to have to live with this relationship. They’re the ones who will have to go back to their friends within the building trades, actually look them in the eyes and say, “It was a Conservative private member’s bill and it was part of this nice package that we managed to put through.” But they’re the ones who are governing and they’re the ones who are making the decision, as far as what is introduced on a daily basis in this House.

Now, again, I just want to go back to our priorities. When you put the focus on the priorities of Ontarians, there’s a lot of good that can be accomplished, but we have to focus on what those priorities are. Again, I need to repeat this: When I was back home over the weekend in Algoma-Manitoulin, not once did EllisDon come up. But I’ll tell you what did come up is reducing auto insurance. I’ll tell you what did come up is, “How can you make my life more affordable?” “Mike, I don’t have a job. Can you help us out that way?” “Mike, there’s a lot of resources that are here in northern Ontario; why aren’t we utilizing those?” “Why aren’t we creating jobs? Why are we talking about those things?” Again, the discussion about EllisDon never came up.

The discussion in regard to the position that we’re taking and the proposal that we made—we were successful in getting a youth strategy job program within this last round of budgeting—is always being discussed. Many

times I talked to kids who are coming out of school. I have my own son. I just went and set him up in North Bay—hello, Matthieu, c'est dad. He's in school right now. He's there—I need to share this with you—on a course called the AMT course. It's the aviation maintenance technician course. He finally listened. I got one out of two who are going into the trades, so I'm good with that. My wife likes to refer to this course as the “ATM course” because every time we go up there we seem to be paying for it. He's going to be coming out looking for a job. Some of our priorities are, why aren't we more focused on getting some of those kids into trades? Why aren't we focused on that?

We have an opportunity here. There's an issue that has come up. We should be focusing on getting our kids when we're into our schools. We can go into our schools and put that right in front of our kids instead of sending our kids where there are no jobs or there is a very low potential of obtaining a job. That's a priority that we could be doing.

The other one that I'm so proud to share with my seatmate here, with all of her fantastic work that she did on the Financial Accountability Office—that was a priority. We heard some rumblings from our friends from the official opposition, but lo and behold, how can you argue with the fact that you're bringing accountability to this province and that you're going to be holding this government to account so that we can prevent a lot of things from happening over and over again? Have we not learned from what happened with eHealth? Can we not prevent what's happening with Ornge? For goodness' sake.

The one thing that I do hear constantly when I go back home in my riding is, “Don't let the Liberals off the hook on those energy relocations, the gas plants, and the amount of money that was wasted there.” I hear that from card-carrying NDPers to card-carrying Liberals to card-carrying Conservatives. We need to have answers on those issues, but that's a priority. That's a real priority. That's why we are very proud of bringing in a Financial Accountability Office. There were more people across this province who made that a priority. That's important, because it's the pressure of the people of this province that actually put the pressure on this government to look at this as a priority. That's engaging with Ontarians, that's engaging with your constituents, and that's what people want to see us focused on in this province. That's what they want to see as a result here in Queen's Park, as we're working here.

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** You're breaking up.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's emotional.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** What was that?

*Interjection.*

**M. Michael Mantha:** Ah non, on va continuer. J'en ai en masse à dire, mais j'essaie de contrôler mes émotions. C'est frustrant, des fois.

I was just saying that the member across the way—actually, that was the first word in a little while that I've heard spoken across the way. I'm glad you're actually

engaged. It's something that is desperately needed in this debate. It is unfortunate that it is only coming from this side.

The public can see right through everything that is happening here in the debate that we are having today over this particular issue. We see individuals—when I go home and I walk the streets, why is it that certain things happen? Call me naïve, but I thought I was coming here with a way of changing things. I thought I was coming here with the thought that things don't really happen that way, that it's not possible that the almighty dollar has control of certain decisions and how they are made.

You know what, Mr. Speaker? I'm wrong. I'm wrong on this one, and a lot of people are affected. It's going to be this government that is going to have to turn around and explain that, to have that explanation or have that discussion, not only with their constituents but with ours. I don't know when the next election is going to happen, but it is going to loom high over their heads.

This decision, along with Bill 115—how can you forget those decisions and how many people they actually impacted? It's not just the teachers that were working in those classrooms. This is not just going to affect the building individuals that are working, that are going to those sites and that are engaged with their employers. It's their families. It's the community facilities. It's the kids that are going to those classrooms. It's the people who are going to be affected around this province.

I warn this government, and I tell you wholeheartedly, you are going to wear this decision. You can try to pass it off that this is a private member's bill from the Conservatives, but you are going to wear this one, as well as Bill 115. You are, and you will wear it.

Again, it might be my naïveté that I think there is a proper way of doing things and that the almighty dollar doesn't always have an influence on making that decision, but lo and behold. It's funny: We always look at the news, and you walk down the street and talk to individuals in your community, and we laugh about how things are done down in our neighbours, in the US, but we're doing the same thing here. One individual stakeholder has had such a big impact that we are talking about that particular issue here today, and it all comes back to the mighty dollar.

There are many priorities that I can talk about that are going on in my riding. I can talk about what's going on in education. I have kids and parents that are really concerned in regard to the closure of their schools and how it is going to affect them, how their kids are going to be relocated from one area to another school, how years of friendships are going to be torn apart because different school boards are going to go with other school boards, or decisions that were apparently made are under review again. Those are priorities that I have.

I have a priority across northern Ontario, where hours and offices of ServiceOntario are at threat of being closed down, where seniors and regular people are going to be forced to go longer distances in order to get the same birth certificates and the same drivers' licences. That's a



priority that I have. Those individuals are caring individuals for their communities, but they won't be able to get that service. It's going to be a challenging time.

1620

I have another priority: the cuts that are happening to MNR. Why aren't we talking about those? As far as I'm concerned, the forest and the mining industry have not deteriorated in northern Ontario, but constantly we see those resources and those jobs in our MNR being cut back. Those individuals are being forced to do more with less. That should be a priority, but we're not talking about that.

We're not talking about another priority, where individuals from across the North Shore and the community on Manitoulin Island are struggling with getting the operating costs to run their water treatment plants. They don't have the tax base. We've talked about this. There have been reports about it for at least the last 12 years where this government has taken action on it, and we all know it in this House. Some of these communities can't even bathe their children or their grandchildren in a bath without worrying about them getting a scare. But that's not a priority right now, Mr. Speaker. I sure as heck hope it's going to be a priority pretty soon, because these individuals need to have the service that they're rightfully entitled to.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** It's funny that we can talk and we can laugh about how certain individuals react, but I speak from the heart when I speak for people in Algoma-Manitoulin. When an individual doesn't have good, clean water to bathe their children or to even drink in their kitchen, to me that's a priority. It might be a joke to somebody else, but to me that's a priority.

You have an opportunity to change this. I think the member from Timmins-James Bay gave you the opportunity. It's an escape for you guys to hold some face and some decency for Ontarians. Engage yourself in this debate and make the right decision.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I'm very proud to rise and speak today on this programming notion, but also with great concern. I have to admit that I am extremely disappointed that the government and the opposition would move forward with a motion that is so clearly favouring a single party donor.

Let's be clear about what we're talking about with this bill. We're talking about the largest construction contractor in the province, which actually has a major presence in my riding. Just recently the owner of EllisDon passed away. He lived in London. His widow is Joan Smith, so we know EllisDon very well in the London area.

The largest contractor in the province—this government is using legislation, rather than allowing them to negotiate with the trades organizations. This government seems all too interested to help this organization release their obligation. It's a speculation that it's because

they're a major donor to the PCs and the Liberals. That's all I'm going to say on that, Speaker, with regard to that—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I must caution the member that it is against the rules of the House to ascribe motive, and I've repeated this several times this afternoon. I've cautioned a number of the members. I will say again to the member for London-Fanshawe that that is outside the rules of the House, and I would caution her in that respect and ask her to be careful with the language.

I return to the member for London-Fanshawe.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I do respect that, Speaker, and I'm sorry for speaking out of turn there. I'll try to stick to the script, or the non-script.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Strike that from the record.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Strike that. The reason we do have this in writing today is simply because it's so important that there are some points I want to make sure I relay on this issue.

My office has received numerous letters from Ontario trades concerned about this motion that has come forward. They're concerned because they feel that the implications that Bill 74 brings to the table are far-reaching, and the implications it has on workers and workers' rights and the fact that an employer, a big corporation, can have the backing of two parties in order to change an agreement that was obtained or written back in 1978.

And we know that the government is hiding behind rhetoric of fairness and even playing fields. But the truth is that this is nothing more than political back-scratching. I don't think Ontarians are that blinded by the game of politics that they don't see this for what it is. It's political back-scratching. I didn't say—I didn't get into the extra stuff, Speaker. So make of that what you will.

When we look at the background and the history here, we can clearly see a pattern, a pattern that should be stopped before more Ontario workers are left out in the cold by this government.

This is not the first legislation where workers' rights have been threatened by this government's legislation. We so clearly remember the cynical Bill 115 and the result of that bill. And this government still hasn't learned the lesson from its mistake: You can't take away rights of workers and expect them to just lie down and continue to be walked over.

So good for the citizens of Kitchener-Waterloo to send that message to this government back in September of—

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** September 2012.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** September 2012. It feels like it's been a while—

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Yeah, and I'm so glad.

We are proud, as New Democrats, that when we had that by-election, we were working hard and we went out and talked to everyone. We knocked on every door. I was in that riding, Speaker, and I knocked on doors for the

member. People were telling us how they felt violated by this government that would bring Bill 115 and not allow the board of education, the union and this government to sit and talk at the table in good faith.

It's really dumbfounding that that kind of thing would even occur in today's world, because we're about democracy, and to me democracy means that different points of view come to the table, as we do here in this House: We have our discussions; we may not agree, we may not see eye to eye. But in the end, perhaps you come, in the middle, to a compromise, and you get things done.

I think that respecting the collective agreements that we were talking about in Bill 115 was extremely important, and people gave you that message very clearly. But they ignored it. They ignored it, and they're hiding behind the cloak of the member—and I don't recall the riding; I'm sorry—who brought the bill forward.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Lambton-Kent-Middlesex.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Say that again?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Lambton-Kent-Middlesex.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Lambton-Kent-Middlesex—the member who brought that bill forward, Bill 74. They're hiding behind that cloak. Maybe that's what they've learned from Bill 115: Don't be the one presenting the bill, but maybe support the bill. But that's neither here nor there.

I think that this kind of legislation is a slap in the face to workers. It's also a slap in the face to Ontarians, everyday people who want to see the business in this House—they want to see results. They want to see each member they sent here be their voice and bring legislation forward that's going to help them make their lives better. Speaker, this does not make people's lives better. This does not make workers' lives better. This makes one corporation's business life better.

EllisDon currently has a master agreement with the Building and Construction Trades Council of Sarnia and Lambton county that dates back to October 1958, which they are desperately trying to get out of. I believe it deserves to be noted that agreements like this are commonplace in this particular segment of industrial, commercial and institutional construction. This is not an uncommon agreement that EllisDon has to adhere to. There are other segments of construction work—of labour—that also have these kinds of agreements. It's nothing new, Speaker.

Back in 2012, when the issue was brought before the Ontario Labour Relations Board, the board voted in favour of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and the steel metal workers, and essentially held that the terms of the 1958 Sarnia agreement were still in effect.

So it was a legal document, a collective agreement. The terms were valid. That's what the labour relations board decided. Effective February 14, 2014, EllisDon must continue to use certain construction trade unions in certain parts of the province where they now are not required to. That's the premise of the agreement. This province-wide master agreement applies currently to six

unions, but other trade unions also have claims set before the Ontario Labour Relations Board.

**1630**

The key factor here is that the Ontario Labour Relations Board ruled in favour of the two unions on a technicality. Here's the part that I'd like to explain: the technicality. This means that they essentially found that the wording of the legislation passed did not invalidate the 1958 Sarnia agreement, even if their intent was that it would.

Recently, the Ontario Divisional Court overturned the February 2012 decision of the Ontario Labour Relations Board and rejected the disputed 1958 Sarnia working agreement. It's very interesting that they did not rule that the Sarnia agreement did not exist, but rejected it nonetheless. In fact, Speaker, the Ontario Divisional Court in no way denied that there was a valid agreement in place. They maintained that finding, yet continued to rule in favour of EllisDon.

What we know is that the Ontario Labour Relations Board recognized that there was an agreement in place and accordingly gave EllisDon two years to try to find a legislative solution to their issue. That was a very wise decision made by the Ontario Labour Relations Board. The agreement was back in 1958; there are parties that have to work out their differences, so two years to me is a decent amount of time for people to communicate and try to resolve their issues. That's what's happened.

But today, effectively, that two-year remedy should be a non-issue, really, and it should be off the table entirely. However, the ruling of the Ontario Divisional Court has changed that. So as it stands, there is no reason to move forward on Bill 74, as it has already been addressed in the legal system. And that's an interesting point too, Speaker, because this morning we were talking about how this is before the courts. Generally, the Liberals' protocol—their best practices, if you will—is to default not to speak on issues before the court. I actually think that's a good practice—I really do—because you should let those matters be dealt with before the court. That's what the court's purpose is.

I found in the Hansard—and I'm really glad that the member for Mississauga-Streetsville is in the House today, even though he may not be attentively listening, because I just said his riding but he's still intently reading his documentation. I'd like to quote from the September 19, 2013, Hansard. Here we go. It says here in the Hansard, "Mr. Bob Delaney:"—so I think I can quote that when I read the Hansard. So here we are, from Bob's mouth to the Hansard: "Why is this debate happening here in the Legislature and not before the Ontario Labour Relations Board? The answer comes down to one word and just one word, and that word is 'ideology.' The fact of the matter is that this is just another piece of right-wing union-bashing." I wonder where that union-bashing comes from which is over on this side of the House?

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Yes, that's right.



"This is just part of the right-wing agenda to see what they can do to take apart unions in the province of Ontario."

I have to say, that was nicely said, because that's exactly the premise of how workers are feeling. Then he wraps it up to say, "Speaker, this is not the answer to any problem. This is just an expression of right-wing ideology, and I'm urging members to vote against it."

Kudos to the member from Mississauga—Streetsville for standing up for workers.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** What happened?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Oh, my goodness; you've gone back on your word. Speaker, I'm shocked that a Liberal would stand up in this House and urge people to vote against this bill, and now he has changed his mind.

What has changed his mind, Speaker? I don't know. I don't know what could be changing his mind, but I'll tell you what—

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Speaker, could you perhaps ask the sideline conversations to keep it down? Though I do—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Yes, I would ask the members to refrain from heckling the member for London—Fanshawe. I need to hear her, and she needs to have an opportunity to make her remarks.

Member for London—Fanshawe.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Thank you, Speaker

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Point of order, the member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Just a clarification: We were actually commending the member for her great remarks. We were not heckling at all this time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** —a point of order.

I return to the member for London—Fanshawe.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Thank you, Speaker. I do appreciate the kindness from the members across there. So—

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Yes. I won't repeat that.

We said, why would that member stand up in the House and—there was a lot more to it, as to what he was saying, but I want to add my own in-fill. He was very passionate. He said that the bill was "union-bashing." That's a very strong word from somebody who then flipped. Let's think about why someone would do that when they made such a passionate plea to the members of this House.

There's a headline, Speaker—I hope I'm not out of order, so you're going to have to censor me because I'm just new at this still. "Money influencing legislation, NDP claims"—whoops.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Absolutely unacceptable. I ask the member to withdraw.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Absolutely, I withdraw, Speaker. That's why I did that preamble about how I'm kind of new here so I wasn't quite sure.

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Now, now, now, now, now.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's a matter of public record.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Yes, that's right.

You know what? We never know what can happen. We have speculation that there's going to be an election looming in the spring. I never take anything for granted—never, never, never. You never know from day to day what's going to happen in this House, you never know from day to day what's going to happen in your life, and you never know from day to day what's going to happen in an election, so never take anything for granted. If I am elected, whenever the election happens the next time around, that would be great, but if not, life goes on. But while I'm here, I want to make a difference. I want to bring a strong voice to London—Fanshawe residents because I believe they deserve that kind of representation. NDP representation has been lacking far too long in the riding of London—Fanshawe.

Also, now that I've said that, I am so proud—and I've said this a couple of times—that we have NDP representation in London West, with the new member we elected in the by-election, and I will say that many times again. We heard the voices of the people in London—Fanshawe in 2011, we heard the voices of the citizens of Kitchener—Waterloo in 2012, and we also heard the voices of London West in 2013. I'm not going to forget our Windsor—Tecumseh member too. I am very proud of him as well, extremely proud. I'm extremely proud they're here. He is awesome. Both of these members are a wonderful addition to this team. We have a wonderful, diverse and colourful caucus.

Saying that—

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** No, it's a very positive thing to have everybody have their opinions and bring their passion to the table. In the end, what we do is—we all have a strong voice from each of our ridings. That's why I'm so proud to be a member of this particular caucus: because—I hope I won't ever eat my words—I think all of our members here—

**Mr. Michael Prue:** If you always say the truth, you never eat them.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** There you go. If you always say the truth, you never eat them.

Speaker, there is something else I would like to read. I would like to read from a letter. I had mentioned that I had many, many letters from the trades sector of the construction industry, and I'm sure many members received copies as well, because we were all c.c.'d. This particular letter was received on September 26 and addressed to the Premier, Kathleen Wynne. I want to read some of the letters—and there were a lot. A lot of these letters were very technical and legal, and I think that would be not as

descriptive as this particular one, so I'm going to just read this one.

1640

The letter is from the Ontario Sheet Metal Workers' and Roofers' Conference employee bargaining agency:

"Bill 74 directly abrogates a collective agreement for the benefit of one employer"—now, Speaker, I hope I'm not speaking out of turn when I read this quote from this letter; again, I'm going to apologize ahead of time for that, in case you have a point of order. "This is not a historical anomaly or a housekeeping issue or even results in leveling the playing field. What Bill 74 does is undo 60 years of bargaining history, eight years and counting of litigation by the IBEW and the Sheet Metal Workers to enforce our bargaining rights and creates incredible instability in the legitimacy of labour relations in the province of Ontario. Further, this bill and your caucus' support of it"—and he's talking about the Liberal caucus—"creates a template by which to undermine other collective agreements found binding by the Ontario Labour Relations Board. Finally, Bill 74 makes it impossible for other trade unions like the United Association to enforce their collective agreements with EllisDon."

I think that says quite a bit. Setting this kind of precedent is going to be long-term damage to the workforce of unions. What did we hear in the Hansard describing this bill by the Liberal member from Mississauga—Streetsville? That this bill is union-bashing.

I'm very disappointed, as I mentioned earlier, that the Conservatives keep bringing these bills to separate and divide workers and employers when we should be focusing on job creation. That is the priority of Ontarians—one of the many, I should say, that I hear in my riding. Let's create jobs.

They also like what the NDP is doing, because we've been getting results in every budget. In the fall of last year—

**Interjection:** Spring.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Or was it the spring? Excuse me. My memory's not so good anymore. Since I got here, it's not so good anymore—in the spring and in the fall. Thank you, Speaker, for allowing me the time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I sat there and I waited, in awe and fixation, that a Liberal or a Conservative would have the temerity, the unmitigated gall—whatever—to stand up and say something about this. Not one of them wants to speak one iota, not one truth, not one word in defence of what you're doing. Does that not say everything about what's happening here today? There is no defence. There is silence. There is absolutely nothing that they can say to defend what they're doing, because they know it's wrong.

And so, therefore, here I am, forced to stand up as another New Democrat—New Democrat after New Democrat—to talk about this, because not one Liberal and not one Conservative has the guts, the fortitude, to stand up

and say why you're doing this. You don't even have that in your heart. You're just going to do it.

You're just going to do it because somebody in the backroom in each of your caucuses said, "We've made a deal. We've got a deal with each other, and we have a deal with EllisDon, and here we are. We've made the deal. Just let it transpire. Let the NDP talk themselves out. We have nothing to say, because we're going to make that all in private. We're going to do it with smiles on our faces, and we're never going to have to justify it to a single person in this province."

Well, here we have a programming motion—

**Interjection:** It's actually time allocation.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** It's a time allocation, but it's a programming motion too.

I listened intently to the government House leader today, chastising the NDP for agreeing to an earlier programming motion. I just want to remind everybody what that programming motion was all about: It was for getting a Financial Accountability Officer for the Legislature. It was agreed to by all three parties. The reason we agreed to the programming motion was to stop the bottleneck put up by my colleagues from the Progressive Conservative Party, who at that time were trying to bottleneck and delay all of the stuff that was going on here.

We agreed to it, not because it was the best thing to do, but because it was the only way to get financial accountability to this House and because we knew that when the vote came up, it would be unanimous, as it was. So there you go. That's what is being thrown in our face.

But what do you have here today? You have a programming motion that does, I will admit, some pretty good things. I'm going to admit that some of the things contained in the programming motion are okay, but EllisDon takes it all away. EllisDon takes it all away. Everything that you're trying to do that is good and reasonable and just and honest is being taken away, and don't ask me why.

Here we have Bill 30, skin cancer. Yes, of course, that's a good bill. My colleague France Gélinas has fought for that for years, and we agree that it has to happen.

We have Bill 70, the Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act, so that dentists can treat their spouses and fill teeth in little, tiny rural towns, because they may be the only dentist who is there. Nobody is going to oppose that. It's going to be unanimous.

Then we have the Ontario consumers act on real estate and electronic gathering of data. Nobody's going to vote against that. You got it.

Then you've got local food. Nobody is going to vote against that.

Then you've got wireless services agreements to help consumers. Nobody's going to vote against that.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I know; I know. I'm just trying to tell you—what you're doing is you are lumping a whole bunch of bills that we would support and we wouldn't



stand up, but wait for the end before you clap, because when I get to the end—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Oh, you're going to get seven or eight.

Then we've got the Hawkins-Gignac carbon monoxide bill, which my colleagues in the Conservatives have proposed for many years, to put carbon monoxide detectors in houses. Nobody is going to vote against that.

Nobody is going to vote against the human resources development, because we think that's a great bill. I've spoken to it myself on at least two occasions. It's a good bill, and we need to regulate human resources professionals.

Last but not least, there's a Select Committee on Developmental Services, which too is a good thing.

And then you go and ruin it all. Then you go and ruin it all by putting forward Bill 74.

Why did you do Bill 74? Is that the price you had to pay to the Conservatives? Did you have to pay this horrible price in order to get seven good bills? Maybe. If I'm very kind to Liberals, I would say that you wanted seven good bills passed and this is the only way you could get the Conservatives off the loggerheads, and you were willing to go along with Bill 74. But I have to ask—

*Interjections.*

**Interjection:** They live; they speak.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Yes, they live and they speak. They clap and they cheer and they say a few words that aren't recorded in Hansard, but it's the only time you ever hear their voice in this House, because most of the time they say nothing.

Now, I stand here all the time, and I heard some of the debate today. I heard some of the debate today saying, you know, "Well, this matter has been now resolved in the courts as of Friday," but I've probably heard 50 or 60 or 80 times at least, in my all-too-brief tenure in this House, Liberals standing up every single time saying, "I can't comment because the case is before the court," or "There is a potential appeal." But all of a sudden, when you want to help your friends in EllisDon, that doesn't matter anymore. I listen to Liberals where what you have always said and what you've always tried to make us believe doesn't matter anymore. So I'm waiting for the next time, because I've heard it 50 or 60 times, and I'm sure I'm going to hear it a good many more times before this Legislature is eventually dissolved for an election. I'm going to wait till the next Liberal stands up and says, "I can't comment. The matter is before the court," and I know all you're going to get from this side is a whole chorus of "EllisDon," because it only matters to you when and if you are trying to protect your position.

Friday's decision is almost certainly going to be appealed to the higher courts, because it's quite flawed. Quite frankly, I haven't had a chance to read all of it, but I'm given to understand from those who have and from lawyers and people who have studied it that it is very flawed.

**1650**

I want to read from EllisDon. I mean, this is really too much. They sent out a press release at 1:27 this afternoon, and it states in part—I want to quote them, because this is just where they stand and, I'm sure, where the Liberal Party stands and where the Conservative Party stands: "While the court's clear judgment in favour of EllisDon is a welcome development, its decision underscores the legitimacy of Bill 74, which would remove any uncertainty and settle this issue permanently, ensuring that EllisDon is never placed in such a position again. The Legislature should have no difficulty enacting legislation that was contemplated by the OLRB and is consistent with the court's decision." There it is.

What EllisDon wants you to do is their bidding. What you are going to do is their bidding. What you are going to do, notwithstanding what the courts are dealing with and notwithstanding the fact that there is likely to be an appeal, is exactly what EllisDon wants. EllisDon wants out of the union contracts. EllisDon wants out of having to negotiate. EllisDon wants to keep the union confined within the very small area of area 8. EllisDon wants to make even more money than they're making now. EllisDon wants to pull your chain. EllisDon wants you to do whatever you can to make sure they have bidding. And you've done that.

I want to read from the programming motion. This is how the Liberals are going to accomplish this, with the help and benefit of their colleagues from the Progressive Conservative Party. This programming motion will do the following—it's entitled Bill 74, Fairness and Competitiveness in Ontario's Construction Industry Act. The Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs will "meet for one day of public hearings and one day for clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 74...." What that means is that as contentious as this bill might be to hundreds of thousands of people in this province, unionized workers, unions, contractors, hospitals, public institutions that use EllisDon—heaven knows how many people are going to be involved—there is going to be but one day of input across the entire province, and then one further day for this Legislature, with a majority Liberal and Conservative coalition, making the decision just to do exactly what they want. So there it is: one day of listening to ordinary people and one day of having your way. There it is in this programming motion. That's what you want to do.

Do you want to hear from people? Absolutely not. You don't want to hear from all the people who think this is a dumb idea. You only want to hear from the select few. I'm sure the first people chosen will be the principals of EllisDon and their few paid lobbyists and whomever you deem appropriate. At the end of that day, that'll be the end of it. Then you'll have one day to make the deal, pass the legislation in committee and send it back here. So there's the first aspect of what you're doing.

The second thing you're going to do is, "The deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the

Committee shall be 12 noon on the sessional day before clause-by-clause consideration of the bill....” Therefore, however fast you can move this forward, everything is going to be cut off on the day before people are actually heard, and there is no further opportunity for additional documentation to come in or for people to be heard. I would assume there may be dozens, perhaps hundreds, of people who would be interested in submitting documentation and/or making a speech before the committee. But are they going to be heard? Absolutely not. The Liberals and the Conservatives are going to cut them off.

And then, the committee shall report on “the sessional day following the day on which the committee met for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill....” So the committee doesn’t have any time to reflect on this. They have until exactly the next day. Pretty fast, eh? Pretty fast around here to hear the stuff, make the decision the next day on what’s contained in the bill and report it to the House—two days later, it’s all over. I don’t know what the rush is, but certainly Liberals and Conservatives know what the rush is. Certainly you know. It’s right here; this is what you’re asking us to do.

And it gets better and better: “Upon receiving the report of the committee ... the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith....” Therefore, the Speaker, on that same day, has to put the question.

Literally in two days, from the time the first person opens their mouth in opposition—and I’m sure there are going to be many—until it’s passed, it’s two days later. Wow. Why is it so important that a bill be passed this fast? I wish all my bills that I put forward were this fast, or that government bills such as the ones I talked about earlier on skin cancer could be done that quickly, or the bills that are important to the people of Ontario. But no, this is the bill that has to be dealt with that quickly. People out there need to ask why.

Then it gets better and better: “In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on the sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading.”

So even if the committee says that this is a lousy bill and they fight and they don’t want to pass it, it’s going to pass anyway. Think about what you’re doing over there. You have neutered the entire Liberal Party in government. You will no longer have a say when you vote for this. You will no longer have a say in what you are doing, what you are thinking or how you are acting. You’re simply going to say, “If we agree with it now”—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I hear the mutterings from the front bench. I wish the muttering from the front bench actually had somebody stand up to say something important to the House, because if you had something to say that’s important, stand up and say it. Don’t just stand there and mutter, because it doesn’t mean a whole lot to me.

Then, “The order for third reading of the bill shall be called no more than five sessional days after the bill is reported.” So even the Speaker can’t delay it. Nobody can delay it. Five sessional days later, it’s going to be law.

Finally, “When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment.”

So there you go: rushing it through; thinking of all the possible angles there are to make friends with EllisDon and all of those people who have come to lobby those two parties, who have come to tell them why they want the bill through, who have come to tell them that making \$3.1 billion a year—which I think they made last year—is not enough; telling them that they no longer want to deal with unionized people; telling them that they no longer want to have all of the constraints upon their doing business in this province. This is a pretty sad day.

I’m not surprised by my friends in the Conservative Party. I listened to Mr. McNaughton from—wait until I get his riding.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Lambton—Kent—Middlesex.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Lambton—Kent—Middlesex—when he introduced the bill. It was a diatribe worthy of Mike Harris. It was a whole bunch of anti-labour stuff and union bosses and all the other things that possibly could be contained in a neophyte speech.

I listened to my good colleague from Mississauga who has been quoted here today. I listened to him saying as much, him telling his own colleagues what this was all about, and then I watched in awe and amazement as, one by one, you fell into the trap. One by one, some—not even some backbencher; some backroom person, somebody in the Liberal Party, whether it was Mr. Duffy or someone else, came to you and said, “No, no; you have to pass this bill. It has to be part of the accord. These other eight things that we want done are important enough that we are willing to sell our souls,” because, in fact, Mr. Speaker, I think that’s exactly what is happening here today.

Do the Liberals believe this bill? Some of them do. It’s the amazing thing about being a Liberal. It never ceases to amaze me how you can be on this side and this side, and tilt at the same time and tilt over here and tilt over there, and put your finger to the wind to see which way the wind is blowing and see what advantage it is to you politically or electorally or anything else, and then vote that way. And to stand up one day, as my friend from Mississauga—Streetsville did, and speak against it, and then to smile sweetly today when reminded of that, knowing full well that he’s going to support this programming motion—it must be wonderful, some days, to be a Liberal.

1700

But I will tell you, I don’t share that. I don’t share that at all.



I think that when Mr. Duffy came to talk to the Premier, if indeed he did—and I'm not sure that he did or didn't, but I listened to the questions today in question period, and the questions were quite succinct, asking the Premier: Did Mr. Duffy come to speak to you directly or to your staff directly, and what was the discussion about?

Of course, the Premier doesn't answer it. The Premier sends it over to the House leader or to the labour minister or to somebody—anybody—rather than answer the question.

People ask me all the time, “Why do they call it question period?” And I say, “That's because you never get any answers.” But the reality is, it shouldn't be called that either. It should be called “response period” or something, because you're not answering the question; you never answer the question; and you certainly don't answer the question when it is to your disadvantage.

I have no doubt in my mind, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Duffy is at the root of all of this: Mr. Duffy, who helped the Premier get elected to her position as Premier; Mr. Duffy, who has been an operative in the Liberal Party; Mr. Duffy, who now works for a consulting firm; Mr. Duffy, who has the ear of that caucus; Mr. Duffy, who made arrangements with the member from Lambton—Kent—Middlesex to put the document in. In fact, I would be highly doubtful if this document, if the bill itself, was not prepared and developed by them.

It's clear to me, what is happening here. It is clear to me that a multi-billion-dollar corporation that builds hospitals, that has government contracts across this province—

**Interjection:** So?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** My friend says, “So?” No, no, they know where they're going. They know how to deal with the circumstances in this Legislature, the parties that are here; they know how to lobby favour; and they know how to get government contracts. God bless them. That's the business that they're in. But the people here had better know that too. When you pass the crane with the “EllisDon” on it in the future, remember this day. Remember what you're doing and remember you are part of this little unfortunate episode of history.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ça me fait plaisir d'ajouter quelques mots à ce débat qui est quand même un moment important. Je l'appellerais quasiment un moment charnière dans le nouveau gouvernement libéral—le disant nouveau gouvernement libéral.

Ce qu'on a devant nous, c'est un bâillon. Un bâillon, ça veut dire qu'il y a plusieurs projets de loi qui ont tous été regroupés ensemble, et on nous impose le bâillon, c'est-à-dire que vous aurez un laps de temps défini pour dire ce que vous avez à dire sur six différents projets de loi.

Le problème, c'est que pour plusieurs de ces projets de loi-là, on n'avait sincèrement pas besoin du bâillon. Pour plusieurs de ces projets de loi, on était tous d'accord,

mais au centre de ces six projets de loi, il y a une pilule empoisonnée. Je vais vous expliquer de quoi je parle.

Dans un premier temps—je commence avec les bonnes nouvelles—je vais vous parler de mon projet de loi pour prévenir le cancer de la peau, le « Skin Cancer Prevention Act ». C'est un projet de loi sur lequel on a travaillé beaucoup et sur lequel il y a consensus. On est 107—on est rendu 106, en fait. On est 106 députés maintenant à l'Assemblée et il n'y a pas un des 106 députés qui va voter contre ce projet de loi-là. On est prêt. Il a passé la première lecture et la deuxième lecture. On est allé en comité. On a fait les changements qui devaient être faits. On a passé le projet de loi ligne par ligne et on était certain, tout le monde, que c'était de ça qu'on devait parler cet après-midi. Nous sommes bien le lundi 30 septembre. On a bien passé la deuxième lecture, les comités, puis tout ça, pour le projet de loi pour les salons de bronzage. Mais plutôt que de parler du projet de loi des salons de bronzage, de finir la troisième lecture pour que finalement ça devienne loi en Ontario, on est en train de parler du bâillon.

C'est triste un peu, cette affaire-là. C'est triste parce que, depuis 2008, on peut compter le nombre de jeunes qui ont utilisé les salons de bronzage. Il va en avoir des centaines, il va en avoir des milliers, surtout des jeunes filles, en général, des très belles jeunes filles. Ces jeunes filles-là se sont exposées à des rayons ultraviolets qui, l'Organisation mondiale de la Santé nous dit clairement augmentent les risques de cancer autant que la cigarette et autant que d'autres cancérigènes bien connus. Le problème, c'est qu'il y a une période d'attente entre les deux. Donc, la jeune fille qui est allée dans les salons de bronzage l'année dernière, deux années d'avant ou trois années d'avant, ça prend environ 10 ans avant que le cancer de la peau se manifeste.

Pendant toutes ces années-là, on avait un gouvernement libéral majoritaire. Pendant toutes ces années-là que j'ai présenté le projet de loi, je l'ai même présenté avec des députés libéraux pour essayer de le faire avancer. On ne voulait rien savoir.

Finalement, au mois de février, la ministre de la Santé vient me voir : « France, ça va si on présente ton projet de loi pour en faire un projet de loi du gouvernement? » Je demande une question : « Comment vite? Comment vite que ça va se passer? » Elle me répond : « Vite. » Puis je dis : « Bien, vite comment? » « Très vite. » Ça, c'est au mois de février. Demain, c'est le premier octobre. On n'a toujours pas notre projet de loi.

Aujourd'hui devait être la troisième lecture. Aujourd'hui, Kate Neale, Joanne Di Nardo, la médecin-hygiéniste de Sudbury, D<sup>re</sup> Penny Sutcliffe, on s'attendait tous à avoir une petite célébration ce soir parce que ça devait être aujourd'hui qu'on fasse la troisième lecture du projet de loi. On n'en fait pas de troisième lecture. On se parle de bâillon à la place. Moi, je ne comprends pas ça. On avait l'unanimité. On est tous d'accord. Pourquoi faire des choses comme ça, des manigances comme ça, qui ne servent à rien? En fait, ça sert à nous ralentir parce que si on avait été de l'avant avec l'horaire prévu—il est

rendu 17h10—je serais probablement au téléphone ou dans mon bureau en train de célébrer le passage de mon projet de loi pour les salons de bronzage. À la place, je suis ici debout à l'Assemblée en train de vous parler du bâillon. C'est pas très gai, l'affaire. Ça, c'est un des projets de loi qu'il y a dans le bâillon.

What we're talking about this afternoon is a closure motion, a closure motion that talks about six different bills. For most of those bills, frankly, had we just let them go their natural life, we would be there already. But there is one poison pill in that series of bills. There is a poison pill.

If you look at them, at their face value, Bill 30, the Skin Cancer Prevention Act—all 107 MPPs have already been on the record that they will support it. We had the cancer society here. We had Kate Neale; we had the medical officer of health here; and everybody gave their unfettered support.

It is time for this bill to go through. It went through second reading; it passed unanimously. It went to committee, and people came and made changes to the bill. We went through clause by clause. We all expected that, this afternoon, we would be talking about third reading of Bill 30, the Skin Cancer Prevention Act, and that by 5:30 or so, we would all gather in my office and have a little happy dance because, finally, we would have got the Skin Cancer Prevention Act through.

1710

You have to realize, Mr. Speaker, that for the years and years we've been talking about this bill—for all those years—young girls, mainly, went and continued using tanning beds. Those young girls probably don't know it yet, but in about 10 years from now, they will see changes to their skin. They will go see their physician, and the physician will be in the really unenviable position of telling them they have to be tested. They have to go for a biopsy, because those changes on the skin don't look good.

Then, some of them will be told they have skin cancer, and some of them will be told they have melanoma, a type of cancer that is really hard to treat. It's treatable, and I wish everybody fighting this disease that they win their battle. But sometimes they don't.

All of this could have been prevented, and this afternoon should have been third reading, but it's not. It's not happening. Instead, we're talking about a time allocation motion.

In this time allocation motion, we have the Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act. We've had a number of MPPs who have worked really hard to bring this act forward. It's something that has been pushed mainly by the dental association. It's a bill that has been worked and reworked and finally had a rendition that could get a lot of support in this House. It has already been scheduled into a committee. People knew to put their names on the list to come to debate in committee and then clause by clause. But all of this is now in limbo because we have a time allocation motion in front of us. Rather than

putting through the tanning bed act, we're talking about time allocation.

Also contained among those six bills is the Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act. This is something that has great support on both sides of the House—all three parties. We've all had constituents come and talk to us and explain to us that a door-to-door salesperson came and sold them a new energy contract that looked so good when they presented it at the door. The salesperson came in and said, "Go and get me your hydro bill." And sure enough, they could get a way better rate. You would pay a third or, maximum, half of what you—"You pay \$200 a month now? \$65, \$67, maximum \$90. This is such a great deal."

Then the bill comes, and what was told and what actually happens are on two different planets. They try to get out of those contracts, and it's near impossible. They know that what happened to them is wrong. They try their best, and then they end up in their MPP's office. I'll bet you that all of us in here have had those meetings with our constituents, where they sit there with a contract they have signed. They don't deny it; this is their signature on that contract. But what they were told and what is actually happening don't match. Then comes the dance to try to get them out of there—not easy.

This bill is pretty simple: stronger protection for Ontario consumers. The name of the bill says exactly what it will do. It will make it easier for Ontarian consumers. It means that if you have one of those contracts that you signed, but really what you were told and what is happening is not the same, it would give you opportunities to get out of there, opportunities to make sure that what you were told is what happens; otherwise, you get ways to get out of this contract.

Then we have Bill 36, the Local Food Act. Sometimes, this Legislative Assembly works in ways that I don't understand. You see, I was at the social policy committee this afternoon, before I came here. We are scheduled tomorrow afternoon for second reading of Bill 36, the Local Food Act. That has finally passed second reading. We have scheduled it to go to committee. There are people who have phoned in and written in to the Legislative Assembly, to the Clerk, and said, "I would like to talk to this bill." They are scheduled to come tomorrow afternoon but, because of this motion, which supposedly is supposed to move things forward, those good people are all being called back today to say, "Don't bother coming, because it's not going to happen tomorrow."

It seems like I'm missing something here, because on one hand I am told that this time allocation motion is to move things ahead, but when I look at what's really happening, it is that, in social policy tomorrow, we will not be sitting. We were supposed to sit and listen to a series of deputants who wanted to come to us and talk about the Local Food Act and wanted to make changes. The following Tuesday was scheduled for clause-by-clause so that, the following week, we would be done. It would be third reading—done; hallelujah, we've passed this teeny-



weeny little bill—but that’s not how it’s going to go. Because we have this motion in front of us, tomorrow the social policy committee will do zip, nada, nothing. We will all—I don’t know—catch up on our email or phone a few constituents. One thing we will not be doing, though, is, we will not be listening to deputants about the Local Food Act because of this motion. Bills that had already been scheduled, such as the Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act, bills that were already well on their way to come to third reading, are now being held back.

I hate when things like this happen. I don’t always understand what’s going on in the Legislative Assembly, but I know what fast and slow are. I was supposed to review this tomorrow, and I won’t be. When will we be looking at the Local Food Act? Well, right now it’s everybody’s best guess, but we all know that it won’t be tomorrow. By the way, if you had put your name on the list to come and do a deputation tomorrow, you’re free, and so am I, because we’re not going to be talking about that.

It sounds weird. There are bills in this motion that clearly did not need to be in there. They had passed second reading. The committees had scheduled them. It went on the Legislative Assembly’s website. The people of Ontario put their names down, and then nothing can happen, because the House is talking about time allocation and happens to have thrown this bill in for absolutely no reason that I can think of, except to hold them back. It feels kind of weird.

Then comes the poison pill that is Bill 74, the Fairness and Competitiveness in Ontario’s Construction Industry Act. You have to give it to them for the name. The name sounds pretty good, doesn’t it? But it has nothing to do with fairness and competitiveness in Ontario. It certainly has nothing to do with creating jobs and has nothing to do with positive movement forward. They threw a poison pill in there. So far, we have bills that were already on their way, that were already scheduled, that everybody already agreed were to move forward, and we have this poison pill.

Then comes Bill 60, the Wireless Services Agreements Act—not a big deal. We’ve all had it. You, your daughter, your neighbour, your parents or your spouse go buy a new cellphone and sign into one of those contracts, because you don’t seem to be able to get out of those stores without having a contract of some kind, and the contract doesn’t make sense for you anymore. The contract is for three years, but after a year your circumstances change—your employer changes, your family changes or you move. It doesn’t make sense, but you’re stuck in this contract for three years, and to get out of paying them the monthly fees for three years—the penalty is more expensive than continuing to pay monthly fees for a phone that doesn’t exist anymore in a city that you don’t live in anymore. This is what Bill 60 is about. When it came for second reading, everybody had their hands up and said, “Yea.” That’s “yes.” We all agreed.

1720

Then we go with Bill 77, the carbon monoxide safety act. This one has a soft spot in my heart, my husband being a firefighter. They certainly would like everybody to have a carbon monoxide detector. The bill is pretty gentle. It doesn’t put any financial constraints on anybody. It came to this House for second reading. It was supported by all. It’s not controversial. It went to a committee that could easily schedule it and get it through—pretty easy stuff.

I’m going to run out of time, aren’t I?

Then we have the registered human resources professionals.

Then we have the Select Committee on Developmental Services, and I really want to thank the member for Whitby—Oshawa for bringing it forward. Since I’ve known her, she has talked about the need to have such a committee in place. She has brought really compelling arguments as to how the system is failing a lot of people with developmental delays and developmental handicaps right now and how we can do better. With all the hard work that she has done, she was able to bring people on-side.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Within her caucus, that is a challenge.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Yes.

Developmental services is not something that grabs headlines. It’s not something that is sexy. It’s not something that people think about unless you’re faced with somebody who has this disability and you know that the province can do better. It’s certainly something the New Democrats would have given their support to.

So here we are, debating time allocation on bills that were either slowed down because of the time allocation motion or that would have gone through anyway. And smack in the middle of it, we have EllisDon and the poison pill. Things could have been a whole lot different if there was a real willingness to move things forward.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I am pleased to have the opportunity to be able to stand today and speak to this programming motion. Like the other members of the NDP caucus who have spoken before me, I too find it very unbelievable what the government and the opposition are trying to pull off here.

We, in the NDP, have sat here over the past many months watching and listening as the Conservatives put up speaker after speaker after speaker to debate bills that had all-party support. They were dragging out debate when it really wasn’t necessary. Quite simply, they were filibustering the debate on bills that they themselves said they were supportive of. They were slowing down the business of this House—

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I smell toast.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That wasn’t called for. I’d ask the member to withdraw that comment.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I withdraw.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Thank you.

Member for Hamilton Mountain.

*Interjection.*

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Well, you know, some members of this House have less taste than others.

They just continued to slow down the business of this House to a snail's pace, leaving the public wondering why everything else takes so long to move through this Legislature. They did this to the debate on the changes to the co-op legislation that was here before us. This was a good bill that was worked on for years by Harvey Cooper and his team from the co-op housing federation, yet the Conservatives thought it was necessary to hold it up and have all their members speak to it, stating that they all have the right to speak on behalf of their residents. I'm curious as to whether they believe that their residents would be negatively affected by this bill. It's another race to the bottom for the workers of this province, who are also the taxpayers and the people who shop and spend their earnings with these jobs, to keep our economy going.

Now they go along with the programming motion to limit the debate. The fact is, the official opposition can choose not to have extensive debate without this motion. They can put up a few speakers and move debate through at a reasonable pace, yet they're sitting quietly.

Let's be honest: For many of the bills included in this motion, there was all-party support. They are not contentious, and we can work together to make sure that they get passed in a timely way, without restricting members in the job that we were sent here to do.

I don't know; maybe they feel that they can get out of that pattern of delay, delay, delay, and move this motion, just for the sake of policing themselves.

It's no surprise that the government wants to limit debate. That's the way they've been definitely rolling these days. I mean, they even shut this place down completely for months, just so they could limit debate. They sacrificed many hours of work that we had already put in to the 100-odd bills that were lost due to their prorogation.

Now we have this programming motion—a programming motion that covers eight bills and one motion: Bill 30, skin cancer prevention pertaining to tanning beds, which is a good bill and which all members of this House support. It was a bill brought forward by my colleague from Nickel Belt three times previously.

Bill 70, a spousal exemption for the Regulated Health Professions Act: We all support that bill.

Bill 55, stronger protection for consumers: We all support it.

Bill 36, the Local Food Act: We've all said it needs work, but we all support it.

Bill 60, on wireless agreements: We all support it.

Bill 77, for carbon monoxide safety: All of us support that bill also.

Bill 32, Registered Human Resources Professionals Act: We all support it.

The motion for the Select Committee on Developmental Services was a very important measure that was

raised here in this House, with all-party support—and here it is before us again—and that the members still support, and, I may add, that the people of this province are really looking forward to.

But let's not kid ourselves here. All of those bills are there for cover—cover for the fact that the Liberals and the Conservatives are teaming up to ram through Bill 74, a bill that tramples over democratic rights and undermines collective agreements.

When questions were asked of the Premier earlier today about Bill 74, she quickly punted it over to the government House leader, who talked about other elements of the programming motion. Particularly, he liked to talk about the Select Committee on Developmental Services.

The committee on developmental services is badly needed, Mr. Speaker. We've waited long enough for it, and families have waited way too long for it. It has all-party support, and we can have it in place in no time. But instead, the government wants to use it as a pawn in their political game, and it's absolutely shameful.

Families are crying out for this government to pay attention to the desperate situations that they are facing as they try to find adequate support and care for family members who need constant supervision and care. The resources simply aren't there for them when they need it, and they do need help.

Many parents of these families are getting on in years, and they've never had it easy. They have had a hard life, by most people's standards. But they are finding it increasingly difficult to care for their developmentally disabled adult children, and they're worried and desperate about what will happen when they are no longer able to provide care or they're no longer around.

Why, Speaker, has this government chosen to muddy the waters of important legislation, legislation that can make a real difference in the lives of people who really need it, by throwing in this contentious Bill 74?

Here we have a piece of legislation done at the directive of one company that wants to renege on a contract that they signed, a piece of legislation that will have repercussions for all collective agreements.

1730

I want to be clear: I am proud to stand here in full support of the collective bargaining process that we have here in Ontario. It's a fair process that has developed and matured over many years and allows companies and their employees to negotiate with one another and reach agreements that benefit both the employers and the workers.

It's a process that brings stability to the workplace. It's a process that helps workers to be able to work in a safe, healthy environment. It's a process that allows workers to get a fair wage for a hard day's work.

Now this government wants to tear that apart for the sake of one company, EllisDon, a company that is a long-time supporter of the Liberal Party. What was it? Over \$100,000 given to the Liberals last year, and over \$30,000 to the Conservatives.



Speaker, I cannot believe for one minute that the good people of this province will not draw their own conclusions about why this bill is getting pushed so quickly through this Legislature. They will connect the dots as they sit at home, wondering when the same prompt attention will be paid to the issues that they face on a daily basis.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I have to ask the member to withdraw her unparliamentary comment. You cannot ascribe motive in this House. It's against the rules of the House. I ask you to withdraw.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I withdraw.

As they wait for surgery appointments that keep getting put off, they will read about the special treatment of EllisDon. As they wait for a promised 15% reduction in their auto insurance, they will wonder what's so special about EllisDon. As families of children with autism sit for years on the waiting list for IBI treatment and those who are being cut off wait for an explanation of why, they will see the concerns of EllisDon being dealt with in no time flat.

As the seniors of St. Elizabeth Villa on Hamilton Mountain wait to see the promised continuation of their physiotherapy actually materialize, they will be sickened—

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** You know they're getting it.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Hey, please, don't tell me about it. You call them. They still don't have their services over there, Minister.

They will be sickened when they witness a huge company, with contracts in the billions, with political friends in the government and the PC Party, get the safe and speedy passage of their legislation.

Yes, for everyone else it's a waiting game, but not EllisDon. As the government House leader said during question period, this programming motion allows smooth passage. EllisDon, I'm sure, will be very glad to hear that, but the people of this province will continue to be disgusted, disgusted about special considerations being made for one single well-connected company.

My constituents on Hamilton Mountain come into my office; they call me; they send me emails and letters. They contact me with concerns about health care, about finding an affordable place to live, about the lack of affordable child care. They contact me to get help dealing with the Family Responsibility Office, to get help with dealing with ODSP, to find a long-term-care space for their aging parents. They contact me because they have been waiting for months to get a response from the WSIB. They get in touch to pass on their suggestions for how the government could make their lives better, and they don't usually mean their own lives but, rather, those of others, because that's the type of people they are. They're always thinking of others. There are literally hundreds each and every week, with various concerns, complaints and suggestions.

But you know something, Mr. Speaker? I have yet to hear from one person who has contacted me to express

their concern for the worries of EllisDon. I would be surprised if anybody else in this House other than a select few have actually heard much different from their residents. But it would appear to me that someone has received at least one phone call, because for some reason this bill is getting favoured treatment over many other items.

Again, we see the government and the official opposition ganging up together to pass a piece of legislation that attacks collective bargaining, just as we saw last year when they teamed up to pass Bill 115, the bill that took away teachers' right to free collective bargaining. We're seeing a bit of a pattern here.

I will say now what I said then: Allow the collective bargaining process to work. Using legislation to circumvent the process takes us down a very slippery road. This business of using legislation to allow a company to get a construction company out of a master agreement is a very bad precedent, and it is one that we should not be setting with this bill.

On top of that, we have a current situation which sees this situation before the courts. Yet our colleagues, both across the floor and next to us on the benches of the official opposition, want to interfere with that legal process with legislation.

How often is it, during question period, that we hear the refrain from ministers that they can't comment because the matter is before the courts? I've heard it from other members, as I've heard it from—today said the exact same thing. I know I've been told that on a number of occasions, when I have questioned ministers on that side of the House. I note that we aren't hearing that now from the government at all, are we? No.

Here we have a matter that is before the courts, and while it is, we see the government ramming through this piece of legislation that is directly specific to a case that is before the courts. It's absolutely unbelievable.

Putting this bill in with all of those other bills in the programming motion does a huge disservice to those bills.

The skin cancer amendment act, which bans youth under the age of 18 from using a tanning service, is a great piece of legislation which, again, I will say, was brought forward by my colleague the member from Nickel Belt. I was happy to see the government finally take notice of this issue and bring it forward as government legislation. It took a long time getting here, but it's here now and I'm happy it is. We all agreed that this was good legislation and should move forward as quickly as possible.

The carbon monoxide safety bill, Bill 77, is another bill that has a very broad appeal in this House. It's a straightforward act that would require carbon monoxide detectors in all homes with a fuel-burning appliance. It has been brought forward here by the member for Oxford a few times, and we in the NDP have supported it to become law.

The Local Food Act, Bill 36, is a bill that we can't complain too much about. We'd like to see some changes

because of the fact that it doesn't really do much, but we were supportive. It's not an offensive piece of legislation, and we're fine with moving it forward.

Similarly, Bill 55, the Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act, could certainly be better, but it moves us in the right direction and we were happy to see that move forward.

I've already mentioned the Select Committee on Developmental Services, but it's worth mentioning again, because this is one piece that particularly annoys me. Here we have a select committee that received the support of all parties when it was first introduced, and it received the support for a very good reason: Quite simply, it's the right thing to do. It gets to the heart of what we should be doing here as legislators. It addresses a fundamental issue of fairness, of what governments can and should be doing to make our province a better place.

All of these items enjoy full-party support and can be moved forward very easily. But no, the government and the official opposition team up to include Bill 74, a poison pill—as I say, muddying the waters for political reasons.

Speaker, we clearly have huge issues with Bill 74, and I've already outlined them. There are people from across this province that see it for what it is. I'm not sure what the discussions are that happened, behind the scenes and behind closed doors, that saw this private member's bill achieve the status that it has, but it's truly amazing to see how quickly the government got on board. They didn't just get on board, and they do sometimes support private members' bills, but to see the enthusiasm of their embrace—to see them not only support but fast-track it—has really been a sight to behold. To put it in with these other pieces of legislation does a huge disservice to the other pieces of legislation that we want to see moved through.

1740

With the passage of the financial accountability act, we have seen what this House can accomplish when we work together, and we can still work together on this. Our leader, Andrea Horwath, asked this morning for unanimous consent to move Bill 74 from this programming motion so that we can move forward with those other bills and motions. Then, this afternoon, a motion was introduced to amend this bill, to remove Bill 74, by my colleague the member from Timmins-James Bay. Both members have opened an opportunity to remove this bill from the programming motion and allow other bills to move forward in the agreement of all members of this House. It's a very simple way to work together to move this forward. This House needs to stop playing politics on the backs of the people of Ontario, pay attention to the things that really matter and affect the everyday lives of the people who sent us here.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Once again, it's an honour; it's an honour to be able to rise in this House on behalf of the people of Timiskaming-Cochrane. Usually I say I'm

happy to be able to speak on whatever bill we're discussing. Today I'm not happy to be discussing this bill, because this is a—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** No, what I'm going to say has to be said. This is a time-allocation bill. For people at home, it's about time politicians allocated their time and got going, but something else it is is an omnibus bill. It's a bill where you take a few good things and you stick in—when I was younger I used to watch the parliamentary channel, the federal one. The Conservatives put through this omnibus bill, and I thought it should be called an ominous bill, not an omnibus bill.

That's what this is. This is an ominous bill, because it mixes some very good pieces of legislation that have been debated—some would say over-debated; our Conservatives to the right here have over-debated a lot of these. We could have gone through a lot of these if they had actually tried to make this place work. For two years, they've been trying to say “no” to everything, and what's really happening now is that they've decided to change the channel, and hopefully grab the remote at the same time. That's exactly what's happening.

Let's look at some of these bills that have been introduced in this time allocation: G30, the Skin Cancer Prevention Act. This has been on the books; I believe it has been introduced four or five times by our member from Nickel Belt. It should have been law a long time ago, because people's health was impacted, and it could have been law a long time ago if the other parties had co-operated. In its essence, it's a good bill. Do we need a time-allocation motion? Do we need an omnibus bill to pass this piece of legislation? No. This legislation could pass in a normal way and would be fine.

The second one, G36, the Local Food Act. Oh, do I love talking about local food. I could talk for another 17 minutes on local food, but that's not the problem. Local food is great. The act itself needs a bit of work, and hopefully sometime we can get into that, but once again, local food is an act that we could all—we'd like to make it stronger, but the Local Food Act doesn't have to be part of an omnibus bill. We've been eating local food for 50,000 years. We could survive for a few more weeks without a time allocation on the Local Food Act.

Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act: another good bill. Is it a perfect bill? No. Will we ever have a perfect bill in this House? Likely not.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Only when we're government.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Yeah. When we're government—hey, when I'm controlling the Local Food Act, things will be different. But it is something we can all work with.

The wireless services agreement: likewise.

Another one, and this one is in a bit different perspective, because this one is a private member's bill: the Hawkins Gignac Act. Once again, it's about carbon monoxide testers in homes.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Uncle Ernie.



**Mr. John Vanthof:** I'm getting to that. I've got a family connection, because my uncle is proposing this bill. It's a good bill. It's been debated here a lot of times. It's been brought forward, if my memory serves me correctly, four times, Mr. Speaker. I'm going by memory. It might have been more, but I'm pretty sure it was four times. Does this bill deserve to be passed? Yes. Does it need to be time-allocated in an omnibus bill? No.

We're getting to my point here, slowly.

The same with the Registered Human Resources Professionals Act: a good bill. It's been on the books before; should be passed. Could it be passed under normal circumstances in this House? Should it be? Yes, Mr. Speaker.

The developmental services committee, same thing: a good bill, good piece of legislation, should go ahead.

Which brings me to the Fairness and Competitiveness in Ontario's Construction Industry Act: not such a good bill. And why? It's a private member's bill, like a couple of other ones. But this one—and all the speakers in our corner here who have been focusing on a lot of issues this afternoon and yesterday, I agree with them all. I'm going to bring a little bit of a different one. I'm going to try it a different way.

The Fairness and Competitiveness in Ontario's Construction Industry Act focuses on one company. It's a law, a change in law, for one company. Can you imagine if the Skin Cancer Prevention Act was only going to outlaw people using one source of tanning beds if they were under 18? It's the same type of thing: It's one. Or if local food was only good for one company, only good for my favourite, or one of my favourites, and I really like these guys; they were my buyer of milk—only good for Parmalat. Once again, there's a difference.

If Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers was only to protect them—if you could only use one company, one cellphone, there is a big, big difference.

Laws—we have a crucial role to play in this Legislature, and we should have debate, which we have, but we should have debate that impacts and discusses all aspects of legislation. We shouldn't make one-offs, because one-offs lead to big troubles, because there is no such thing as a one-off.

If you want to discuss legislation and you want to—I'm not opposed to discussing this legislation. But then we should have not a time allocation discussion; we should have a real debate about what the ramifications of this one bill are. It shouldn't be hidden—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** And the Liberals should vote against it.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I'm getting to that.

It shouldn't be hidden in an omnibus bill. It's bookended by a bunch of bills that everybody wants to pass. It's bookended by a bunch of good bills.

You've had a lot of exercise this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, because I was watching you while I was in committee, and I'm going to try to not say anything that you have to—and I don't want to withdraw, either.

So we have some great things in this province—fantastic—and in this country. What I found out today in

committee is that if you look on the FSCO website for insurance, there's a place on the FSCO website where you can find the cheapest insurance company. That's pretty important, and that would make a lot of difference in a lot of people's lives.

**1750**

You know what else you can find on a website? You can find out who donates to all our campaigns. And if you really search, you can find out who donates the most to all our campaigns. That is really interesting information to know. It really is. And not just for all issues, but it's really interesting information to know because you'll have a lot of "aha" moments.

I would suggest, for those at home and for those wondering what's going on here, that we all spend some time and look at financial donations. There's nothing wrong with financial donations; that's how this political system is funded. I don't have a problem with that. I hope that everybody looks up mine. The Dairy Farmers of Ontario donated to my campaign; I just thought I'd let everybody know. But everyone should look, and it would put a context on this debate. It would put a big context on this debate because the fairness—even the title, I, for the life of me, can't understand why the government would not want to have a real debate about this issue as opposed to this.

It's too bad the member from Mississauga–Streetsville isn't in the room, but it's not often that I—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** You can't make reference to another member's absence. I'd ask you not to do that.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I'm sorry. I withdraw.

I would like to quote the Hansard—

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** You didn't know that?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I didn't know that. I'm sorry.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** It's because you're new.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** That's because I'm new.

I would like to quote the member from Mississauga–Streetsville in Hansard. It was about Bill 74, Fairness and Competitiveness in Ontario's Construction Industry Act. It comes from September 19, 2013:

"Why is this debate happening here in the Legislature and not before the Ontario Labour Relations Board? The answer comes down to one word and just one word, and that word is 'ideology.' The fact of the matter is that this is just another piece of right-wing union-bashing. This is just part of the right-wing agenda to see what they can do to take apart unions in the province of Ontario." This isn't me saying this, Speaker—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Who's saying that?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's the member from Mississauga–Streetsville.

"Speaker, this is not the answer to any problem. This is just an expression of right-wing ideology, and I'm urging members to vote against it."

Why wouldn't they want to have a real, fulsome debate? If this truly is a piece of right-wing ideology, let's

have a real debate about it. Let's discuss it, if we really want to move this province in that direction—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I'm wearing my green tie today. Let's not slip it under the door.

**Interjection:** Like the budget.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Well, we had a full discussion about the budget.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** My colleagues to the right are not enjoying some of my comments. I can't believe why my colleagues to the right wouldn't want a fulsome, wholesome discussion about this if this is right-wing ideology, because if I had right-wing ideology, I'd be proud of it and I'd want to discuss it and not stick it in an omnibus bill. That's the problem. That's the whole problem. This House is where we're supposed to discuss the future of the province, where we make laws for the future of the province, and especially something like this, where it could impact not only one labour agreement but many labour agreements in the future throughout the province. If you really want to have an anti-labour discussion, let's have it.

Especially, I can see my right-wing colleagues here wanting to have it, but why it gets slipped under and bookended by the government—between Bill 115 and this one, what's next? That's a big problem. I never thought that we would have to resort to omnibus legislation to basically hide what you stand for. That's a big, big problem, Speaker.

**Interjection:** Bob Rae.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Bob Rae found his true home.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** People are losing track of my speech, Speaker. I'm going to switch back to another problem, back to local food.

Under this omnibus bill, the debate for local food got kind of—the committee, you know, bam, bam, bam, bam, and that's great. I'm surprised the Conservatives wanted to go for this because they claim to be the rural representatives. We're going to have a couple of afternoons of hearings about local food in downtown Toronto, where the people who actually—because local food means something to the people in Timiskaming who can't come to downtown Toronto on a couple of days' notice in the fall, when you're harvesting. It means a lot to my abattoirs, and if anybody knows anything about local food, this is the busiest time of year for abattoirs. Obviously, no one was thinking when they decided, "Well, this is the day for the hearings for the abattoirs," because that's local food.

Local food should be discussed in other parts of the province than Queen's Park. The two forces of omnibus: Did they think of that when they decided to come together with this? No, they didn't. They didn't. In their rush to hide this one little bill, which is really a big, big change in the way our collective bargaining works, they have

forsaken some of the other things that they claim to uphold.

It's the same with carbon monoxide safety, the Hawkins Gignac Act. That should go by itself. If you want to clean this up—and my colleague, my House leader this morning made a motion to take the Fairness and Competitiveness in Ontario's Construction Industry Act out of this programming motion and have a real discussion about it. That would be one way to fulfill our duties as elected legislators to actually look at what we're voting for and have a real discussion about what we're voting for.

The fairness and competitiveness act: We had one afternoon on a private member's bill allocation, and now it's being rushed through the House. It's more important than all kinds of other stuff, and it's just being rushed through the House. The government says, "Oh, no, no, no. You don't understand. This is a Tory bill; this isn't us." Well, wait a second: The Tories can't rush things through the House by themselves—

**Interjection:** Not yet; not yet.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Well, the way you guys are going, maybe never.

But that's a real problem. The biggest problem is—

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Flip-flopping.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Oh, flip-flopping we can talk about: the member from Mississauga—Streetsville.

I don't mind having the debate. I think we all really like to have the debate, because that's how good legislation is made. But if you want to push legislation through that's had 40 minutes of debate in a private member's slot, that's going to change the way we do collective bargaining in this province forever for one company—and you call this a good legislative agenda? How can you stand for that?

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** You know, if you didn't support the budget, we wouldn't be discussing this.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** If you didn't prop up the budget.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** You know what? The budget—we did something in the budget. We did something in the budget that is going to help people, regardless of party, whoever comes in. The Financial Accountability Office will hold all parties accountable.

**Interjection:** Too late.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Oh, no, I'm sure there are a few boondoggles coming. You know what? Maybe someday you guys can sell another 407.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** There must be something else in the province you could give away if you come to power. There's still a little bit of Hydro left. You could give away some more of Hydro.

You see, that's what the FAO is for. What we're doing is, we're trying to learn. Right now, we're learning from other people's mistakes—and yours too, in the past.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Oh, you guys don't make any, though.



**Mr. John Vanthof:** Everybody makes mistakes, but the smart people learn from them.

Something we did—with the Financial Accountability Office, we pushed legislation through that will help this Legislature become a better place.

What you, the Liberals and the Tories, are pushing through in this omnibus bill is legislation that could hurt the province of Ontario—without any discussion—and that is something that we strongly oppose. I think we

have all expressed that, and we will continue to express that. It should have a much longer debate, and it shouldn't be stuck in an omnibus bill. Bill 74: It's a bad thing.

*Debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1802.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
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Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

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Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
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<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
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Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
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Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
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Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
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Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	



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Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Holyday, Douglas C. (PC)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
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MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
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<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
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<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
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Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
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<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
<b>Oraziotti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Qadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
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<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
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Grant Crack, Vic Dhillon  
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France Gélinas, Helena Jaczek  
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Jagmeet Singh  
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Mike Colle, Vic Dhillon  
Cheri DiNovo, Ernie Hardeman  
Helena Jaczek, Jane McKenna  
Paul Miller  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short







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Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
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Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
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(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
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**Tuesday 1 October 2013**

**Mardi 1<sup>er</sup> octobre 2013**



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 1 October 2013

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 1<sup>er</sup> octobre 2013

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### PROTECTING STUDENTS ACT, 2013

### LOI DE 2013 PROTÉGEANT LES ÉLÈVES

Mrs. Sandals moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 103, An Act to amend the Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996 with respect to discipline and other related matters / Projet de loi 103, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1996 sur l'Ordre des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'Ontario en ce qui concerne la discipline et d'autres questions connexes.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Ms. Sandals.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I'm pleased to be able to stand in the House this morning and speak in support of the Protecting Students Act, which would, if passed, make an important amendment to the Ontario College of Teachers Act. I will be sharing my time with my parliamentary assistant, the member from Scarborough—Rouge River.

Speaker, we know that the vast majority of Ontario teachers do an excellent job supporting our students. They are dedicated to our students' success and are passionate advocates for their safety and security. It is because of their efforts that we have seen so much progress in our schools over the past 10 years. The percentage of students in grades 3 and 6 who are meeting or exceeding the provincial standard in reading, writing and math has increased 17 percentage points since 2003. In other words, 150,000 more elementary students are reaching the provincial standards than would have had the rates remained the same as in 2003.

We are also seeing more students graduating from high school than ever before. Back in 2003, 68% of high school students were graduating from high school. Today, 83% of students are graduating and moving on to post-secondary education, a skilled trade or into the workforce. What that means is that there are 150,500 more students now on a better path in life than had the graduation rate remained the same as in 2003.

This progress has been no accident. It has been the result of a collective focus by the entire education sector

to pursue ambitious goals for our students: to raise the bar of achievement; to close the gaps in achievement by giving our struggling students every opportunity to succeed; and to increase confidence in publicly funded education. Speaker, we have been able to make important progress on all of these goals because of the commitment, professionalism and dedication of Ontario's teachers.

Our teachers have also been instrumental as we implement new and exciting initiatives that will take our education system to the next phase of student success. For example, by September 2014 all four- and five-year-olds will have access to full-day kindergarten, which is the most significant transformation in our education system in the past generation. This year, more than 180,000 of the province's younger students will benefit from full-day kindergarten in approximately 2,600 schools. In September 2014, approximately 265,000 students across Ontario will benefit from this program, which features the expertise of both a teacher and an early childhood educator in the classroom.

The early indicators for full-day kindergarten are already extremely encouraging, Speaker. Much of the program's success can be attributed to the enthusiastic teachers who have embraced the goals of the program. They have worked tirelessly to prepare their classrooms to accommodate their young students throughout the day, and they have worked closely with the early childhood educator in their classroom to build a cohesive and effective team environment.

It goes without saying that everyone in this Legislature knows what kind of incredible influence a teacher can have in the lives of our children. In fact, I'm sure that everyone here today can recall a teacher of their own who was instrumental in their life and help put them on a path to success. A great teacher can make the words of a good book come to life. A great teacher can show you how an abstract math problem can have application in the real world, and a great teacher can see the potential for success in every student. Speaker, this describes the vast majority of teachers across Ontario. It is what sets our education system apart from so many other jurisdictions. Whether our education sector thrives is based on the quality of our people, and we are privileged to have some of the best people right here in Ontario.

Along with quality, dedicated teachers, we also need to ensure our students are able to learn in a safe and accepting environment. Students who feel safe, welcome and connected to school are more likely to succeed academically. They cannot be expected to reach their full



potential in a school environment where they feel intimidated. As a grandmother, I want to know that my grandchildren, along with all children in Ontario, are safe and protected when they walk through their school doors each and every morning. That is why our government has taken a number of steps to increase the safety and security of our students.

For example, we introduced the Accepting Schools Act nearly a year ago. The act requires all school boards to take preventative measures against bullying, consider tougher consequences for bullying in certain circumstances, and support students who want to promote understanding and respect for all. But more than any other legal requirement, the legislation sends a strong message that respect and understanding for all students, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability or any other factor, are important components of a safe and successful school environment. We were incredibly pleased as a government that so many teachers were some of the first people to be enthusiastic supporters of the Accepting Schools Act.

0910

In addition to that act, we've taken other steps to increase student safety. Just last year, we reopened the Safe Welcome Program to allow more elementary schools to purchase and install security access devices that provide school staff with greater control of who enters the school. As a condition of receiving the funding, schools must lock their front doors during school hours in order to restrict access and help keep schools safe.

Speaker, whether it is the Accepting Schools Act, the Safe Welcome Program, or the many other resources we have provided school boards, teachers and support staff, we have had an ongoing commitment to student safety in Ontario, and it is a commitment that continues today with the Protecting Students Act.

While we know that the vast majority of teachers are committed to the success and safety of their students, we need to ensure that in those rare circumstances when discipline is necessary, teachers, students, parents and administrators can all count on a disciplinary system that is open, transparent and effective. The Ontario College of Teachers is an independent regulatory body that is responsible for regulating the teaching profession in Ontario, including disciplinary proceedings. These proposed changes would help give the college the tools it needs to ensure there is a transparent process in place when disciplinary action is required. It would also give the college increased ability to protect our students when there may be an immediate danger to a student.

Most of the proposed changes in the bill reflect recommendations from a review of the college's investigation and disciplinary procedures conducted by the Honourable Patrick LeSage. Justice LeSage's report contained 49 recommendations to modernize the Ontario College of Teachers' investigation and discipline processes. Since the release of this report, our government has been working closely with the College of Teachers to address

all 49 of the recommendations. For example, back in January 2013, the college began posting the outcome of disciplinary proceedings on their website to ensure that these decisions were open and transparent to the public. We've continued to work with the college and other areas where they could take action to address the recommendations on their own authority.

I want to acknowledge the leadership at the college, not only for asking Justice LeSage to conduct the review, but also for moving quickly to address his recommendations. However, while the government and the college have been working hard to address many of the recommendations, some of the recommendations do require legislative changes, and the Protecting Students Act would address the remaining recommendations. The proposed legislation and subsequent regulations in the Protecting Students Act would improve the college's disciplinary processes, reduce the potential for conflicts of interest and help increase the protection of our students.

Speaker, I know my parliamentary assistant will go into further detail about the legislation, but I want to take this opportunity to talk about a few key elements of the bill. First, the legislation would, if passed, ensure that a teacher's certificate is automatically revoked if they have been found guilty of sexual abuse or acts relating to child pornography. This is an area where we are actually proposing stronger provisions than what Justice LeSage originally recommended. While LeSage did not recommend mandatory revocation of a certificate, we don't believe there is any reasonable circumstance where there is a confirmed case of sexual abuse or child pornography where a teacher should be able to keep their teaching certificate.

There is also a provision in the bill that would prevent an individual from reapplying to the college for a teaching certificate for five years if they have been found guilty of sexual abuse or child pornography. I should explain that while people can reapply, it is in fact rare that they do reapply; however, if they do reapply after five years, the college still maintains ultimate decision-making power over whether a certificate is reissued. And even if a certificate is reissued, it is unlikely that the individual would ever actually be hired by a school board now that all the disciplinary information has been posted. But the five-year mandated time period is an increase compared to the current college practice of one to three years of revocation, depending on the circumstance. The five-year time period is consistent with other regulated professions in the health sector.

Another component of the bill would allow the college to move swiftly to remove a teacher's certificate if the college has reasonable grounds to believe that a child is at risk of harm or injury. If such a case arises, the college would have the ability to suspend, on an interim basis, a member's certificate, and notify the school board immediately so as to limit the risk of the teacher remaining in the classroom.

These are examples of provisions in this bill that would improve the protection of our students and en-

hance the efficiency and transparency of the Ontario College of Teachers' disciplinary processes. These are processes that we know the vast majority of teachers will never experience, and only in rare circumstances do our teachers require disciplinary action. But in those rare cases where they do, they need to know that the process will be fair, open and transparent. Teachers need to know that if there are allegations made against them, the discipline process will not drag on unnecessarily, and it's important for parents to know that the college has taken swift and appropriate action when discipline is required, especially in cases involving sexual abuse or child pornography. By improving the disciplinary process for these rare circumstances, we can increase the already strong public confidence in the vast majority of teachers who dedicate their lives to helping our students succeed every day. This proposed legislation, if passed, would strengthen the authority of the Ontario College of Teachers to take action, while ensuring the process is open and transparent for everyone involved.

Speaker, this is one more example of our commitment to improve student safety so that students have every opportunity to succeed. I look forward to the support of all the members of this House on this very important piece of legislation.

I would now like to call on my parliamentary assistant to provide some more details of the legislation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Scarborough—Rouge River.

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to add my voice in support of the Protecting Students Act, Bill 103. As the minister pointed out, we know that so many of our teachers are professionals and are committed not only to their students' success but also their safety. But for the very small percentage of teachers who require disciplinary action, we need to ensure an effective and transparent process is in place at the Ontario College of Teachers.

In the fall of 2011, there was greater scrutiny of the discipline practices of the college. The college was criticized for not being transparent enough about disciplinary decisions and also for the substance of some of those decisions. It was clear that we needed to give the college more tools to strengthen its disciplinary practices as well as open up those processes so they are transparent to the public. This is what the bill will do.

The minister touched on a few details of the bill that specifically deal with sexual abuse and cases of child pornography. But I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a few of the other important elements in the bill. For example, if passed, the proposed act and subsequent regulations would help address any perception of conflict of interest of the college. Ontarians expect the college to govern the teaching profession independently, and even the perception of a conflict of interest has the potential to erode some of that public confidence. By restricting who can sit on the college's committee panels, specifically restricting the ability of union officials to sit on those committees, the proposed bill will ensure that there isn't even a perception of a conflict of interest.

Speaker, the bill will also help improve the communication between school boards and the college, particularly when a school board has restricted the duties of a teacher. If passed, the Protecting Students Act would also allow the college to share information with the school board if the subject of a complaint poses an immediate risk to a student. If a complaint is made against a teacher by someone other than the school board, there is a risk that the board may not be aware of the complaint until the college has completed its investigation into the allegation. We think that this is too big a risk to take, especially if a child could be in harm's way. By improving the communication between the college and the board, the school board can take the appropriate action locally to ensure student safety.

**0920**

The act would also permit the college to disclose personal information to other regulators and to the police to assist in their investigations. We think that there are reasonable steps to ensure co-operation between agencies and to better protect the public.

To improve transparency of the college, all decisions of the discipline committee would be published on the college's website. In cases where allegations have been determined to be unfounded, the teacher would have the option to include the decisions in the college's official publication.

Speaker, the proposed bill would also ensure the college resolves cases more quickly and efficiently, while maintaining a rigorous investigation process. For example, the investigating committee should review and dispose of most matters in 120 days, while allowing some flexibility to account for circumstances beyond the control of the committee. Teachers, as well as parents and administrators, need to know that complaints will be addressed in a timely manner, and this provision will help the college avoid unnecessary delays in resolving cases.

We also think that it is important to recognize the distinct responsibilities of a principal or vice-principal, particularly in disciplinary proceedings. Therefore, the proposed bill would require that an investigation or disciplinary panel include a principal or vice-principal when hearing a matter relating to conduct of a principal or vice-principal. We believe it is reasonable to expect that if you are a principal or vice-principal who is the subject of a complaint, part of the disciplinary panel will include someone who is familiar with the role of a principal or vice-principal and will be able to offer that important perspective during proceedings.

In response to Justice LeSage's recommendations, the bill will also provide greater clarity on when the dispute resolution process should be used, rather than a full investigation. Relatively minor complaints that might normally result in a caution or admonishment of the teacher could be directed to dispute resolution by the registrar of the college. This will allow a greater amount of the college's time and resources to be spent on more serious complaints, which would be referred to the normal investigation process.



There would also be clarity about what complaints could not go to dispute resolution, including cases of sexual abuse or child pornography. Those cases quite rightly require an open and transparent investigation process.

Speaker, these are some of the key elements of the bill that will improve the safety of our children and give the college the tools it needs for the rare circumstances when discipline is required. It is important for Ontario families to be confident that appropriate action has been taken in those rare cases, and it is important for teachers to know there's a fair, transparent and effective process in place.

I believe the proposed provisions in this bill strike the right balance between student safety, increased transparency and accountability, while improving efficiency and effectiveness of the current processes.

I know we can all agree that Ontario's children are our most precious resource. Our schools must support safe and healthy learning environments where students can succeed and reach their full potential. Part of ensuring that environment exists is making the changes proposed in the Protecting Students Act, and I encourage all members of this House to support this very important bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I listened carefully this morning to the opening remarks made by the minister, as well as the parliamentary assistant, and it was brief, given that they would normally have an hour on this Bill 103. I listened with some intent, I've read the explanatory sections of the bill and I have two or three things that are interesting. I'm certain our critic, Mr. Leone, would be able to respond; he'll likely get two minutes as well, as well as an hour if he needs it.

I know in our caucus there are people who have been teachers. I've been a teacher; I have a daughter and two or three daughters-in-law who are teachers; my wife is a teacher. She's now a school trustee. I see Mr. Leal is here; his wife is a teacher—now a principal. So we're all concerned about the safety of children and the quality of education.

More importantly than this bill itself, I'm more interested in the regulation that recognizes seniority over quality and education and training. That's one of the regulations that we're hearing a lot about in our constituency as a result of a prior piece of legislation by this same minister.

But if you really look at this thing here, there is an ability to suspended and revoke a licence of a teacher in circumstances where a committee has determined that inappropriate conduct occurred. I agree fully that they should revoke the licence. Now, there is a provision here to reinstate them within a five-year period, but most of the record would show that persons who have issues with pedophilia are not rehabilitable—not able to be rehabilitated; let's put it that way. It troubles me that there's a way to get back in, and if they're not just in a classroom, maybe they're going to be left on the supply list or some out-of-classroom function. So I still have questions on—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you very much. Further comments?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I listened with some attention as well to the Minister of Education and the parliamentary assistant on Bill 103. No one is going to argue against measures that go that extra step to protect children. I think that we actually have to have some context, though here. They're moving forward. I mean, there's been a lot of conflict in the education sector. In many sectors across the province, teachers are already feeling that, post-Bill 115, they are being attacked and that the level of professional attention that they pay every day in our schools has been undermined.

The professionalization of the teaching profession is an ongoing journey; I think most teachers would say that. A lot of this starts actually at the faculties of education. Interestingly enough, there's a seminar going on right now in Waterloo which is looking to radically change public education in the province of Ontario, and they talk openly—and I think the Minister of Education may be going there this week—about the engagement of teachers and the connection with the engagement of students. That relationship has to be honoured. At the same time, you've reeled in the parameters and the framework to protect children in all cases.

Section 6, number 1, the new section under 29, requires the registrar to refer a complaint to the executive committee. A lot of this bill deals with: Once the complaint has come forward, what is the most responsible way to deal with that complaint? And, of course, reporting the matter under the Child and Family Services Act needs to happen. I think that it has happened under most cases, but there are always that one or two situations where it doesn't happen.

So we support having a stronger process in place, but I think that we have to find a balance between ensuring that the safety of children is honoured and that the professionalization of the field is honoured as well.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you very much, Speaker for giving me the opportunity to speak on a very important bill, the Protecting Students Act.

I think none of us in this House will dispute the fact that we are really blessed in the province of Ontario to have some of the best teachers in the world: teachers who are professionals; teachers who are dedicated; teachers who are passionate about children and the education they provide to children. I have regular interaction with teachers in my riding and I'm always amazed by their level of commitment and professionalism and their drive to make our school system one of the best.

I think all of us have personal stories as well—teachers who made an incredible impact in our lives. I've had the opportunity to receive education on three different continents, in three different countries in this world. In every respect, in every aspect, in every grade that I was in, I can recount a teacher or two who changed my life and has enabled me to do what I'm doing.

I think, for me, as I look at this piece of legislation, our drive is to keep that going for all children and make sure no child is left behind. In that very rare circumstance, that very rare situation where a criminal offence is done, where a child is endangered, we need to make sure we have the best system in place, that we do not leave that child behind and there are support systems and mechanisms in place for not only that child to survive and sustain through the trauma they may have received, but also to make sure that that type of situation is never repeated again.

Ensuring that we're putting in a system with greater transparency, accountability and efficiency in the disciplinary system relating to teachers is very important, and I look forward to debate on this bill.

0930

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. As always, it's a great pleasure and honour to rise here in the chamber and debate certain bills that come forward, in this case Bill 103, the protection of children act.

Being a former teacher myself—and my wife is an elementary teacher, and I know there are quite a few people here. As the member across the way alluded to, they are extremely dedicated to the profession. They get into the profession because they love nurturing young minds and enabling young people and giving them hope for the future. I would like to think that's the intent of all teachers when they go into that profession—although it's not necessarily the case. Of course, there are predators who go into the profession specifically to target our young children. So absolutely, we have to have mechanisms in place to address this. There already are mechanisms in place.

This bill is going to need some tweaking, and that's what it does: It does some minor tweaking. I think that all parties can obviously agree that this bill is going to move forward at some juncture after debate.

But again, let me just point that out we have graver concerns in the education system than Bill 103 that's being proposed and brought forward here today. Regulation 274 is a huge concern for ourselves and young teachers trying to break in to the profession. I know I'm inundated back home in my own riding from young people who are frustrated, who have accumulated massive amounts of debt to get their teacher qualifications and are frustrated, as are their parents, that they're unable to get a job here in the province of Ontario.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for your time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The Minister of Education has two minutes to respond.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I'd like to thank the members from Durham and Kitchener–Waterloo, the Minister of Labour and the member from Northumberland–Quinte West for their remarks.

I want to just pick up on something that the member from Northumberland–Quinte West said. In fact, the

Ontario College of Teachers Act already has extensive mechanisms. What has happened here is that Mr. Justice LeSage did a review of those disciplinary and investigative processes and said, "Here are 49 ways in which you can make them even better." These are the 49 recommendations that we are following up on.

I also want to pick up on the remarks from the member from Kitchener–Waterloo about balance, because I think that's very important. We know that the relationship, as she mentioned, between teacher and student is key. We need to recognize that the vast majority of teachers are doing a wonderful job and that there needs to be balance in the process.

One of the things that my parliamentary assistant mentioned was that we are trying to actually make the process so that there are timelines where the college will deal with complaints more expeditiously. Obviously, parents want complaints dealt with expeditiously, but it's to the advantage of the member to have complaints dealt with expeditiously, because if the complaint is found to be unfounded, we want to get that black mark off the teacher, the accusation dealt with and dismissed, as quickly as possible. So that's part of the balance. In fact, the registrar has actually been given more authority to deal with frivolous and vexatious complaints, where clearly they are unfounded.

I would suggest that, in fact, there is balance in dealing with that which is truly bad very definitively, and where we need to look at finding whether or not complaints are truly founded, that we also have the ability to deal with unfounded complaints more quickly, too.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Mr. Rob Leone:** I'm pleased to rise on behalf of the PC caucus to discuss this bill, which, obviously, amends the Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996. I wanted to start off my comments—I know that I've been newly appointed as the education critic—

*Applause.*

**Mr. Rob Leone:** Thank you.

This is the second day on the job, and they asked me to do a one-hour lead right off the bat, so I'm a little enthused by the results of how this all transpired. Maybe it's a conspiracy among House leaders who have put this on my table.

What I do want to say is—I think I can speak for all members of this House, and certainly for members of the Ontario PC caucus—that we have the best front-line teachers in the world. I think it's important to remember that in the course of our deliberations during this bill; we have to keep in mind that we do have the best teachers in the world. They're practising and teaching our students right here in the province of Ontario, and we should do our best to celebrate, I think, what can amount to no less than miracles in the classroom every day.

As a parent of three young boys, I feel especially privileged to have this opportunity to talk about education policy here in the province of Ontario, because it strikes right to the heart, right to the core, of what we are. I do note, and I think that members of this Legislature do



know, that my youngest boy is about five months old—almost six months old now—and I know the member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex had a child in August. The member for Kitchener–Conestoga—their family is actually expecting a baby this December. Three new, tiny Tories are going to be born into this world this year, so we have lots to celebrate on this side of the House, Madam Speaker.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** That's good for declining enrolments.

**Mr. Rob Leone:** The member for Kitchener–Waterloo says that's good for declining enrolment, and I think that's absolutely true.

Madam Speaker, as I am taking over from my colleague from Nepean–Carleton, who was the education critic up until yesterday, I want to offer very publicly my sincere gratitude to the member for Nepean–Carleton for the hard work that she has done on this file. Thank you.

I think that it's important to understand that this caucus has a lot of young children in it. I know the member from Nepean–Carleton has a young daughter whom she cares about very deeply, and so this policy area strikes to the core of what we are as parents. I think that it's very important to have an ability to debate a piece of legislation like this that is charged with the task of protecting our children. I think, as a parent, I feel very strongly about that.

I hope to have a little bit of indulgence to talk about some of the things that my predecessor, the member for Nepean–Carleton, has said in this Legislature. I think that the Minister of Education had the opportunity to enumerate some of the policies that her government has brought forth that have obviously involved children and teachers and parents as well, and protection of all the above groups.

I also want to talk about some of the things that we've been working on, because I think the member for Nepean–Carleton has ushered in a number of ideas that merit the consideration of this Legislature. A lot of those ideas are enumerated in our Paths to Prosperity document on education to try to give our kids the best start possible, because we do know, and I think everyone acknowledges, that education is the great equalizer of society. Certainly, I believe that and I think that we owe it to our children—not even just our own children, but all children in Ontario—to have the best sort of education policy.

One of the things I love about that white paper is the fact that we talk about the need to incorporate greater financial literacy in our curriculum. I think it's important to understand that in an era where we have mounting household debt, sometimes the understanding of how to actually balance a household budget gets lost on some folks. If we teach children at a young age to be responsible about their finances, I think it would be a very important step into, when they grow up and start their own families, having the literacy and numeracy skills that obviously are important to success in life.

0940

The white paper also talks about protecting rural schools. I know there's an issue in rural Ontario with

declining enrolment and what we do with the surplus space that is in our schools. Some very tough decisions are made by our school boards each and every day in terms of what kind of schools and what schools actually have to close, whether we build new ones to replace them, whether we bus students from place to place. These are obviously very important aspects to many of my colleagues who are from rural Ontario. We have a desire to just talk about the policies that will obviously alleviate some of those concerns—and we do talk in the white paper about how we have a desire to utilize some of that school space for a community purpose, so we can multi-purpose our schools and perhaps we can keep some of these schools open. Those are some of the ideas that we talk about in that white paper.

Certainly I know the government will love to talk about how we actually discuss Don Drummond's findings in that white paper. I'll leave that for another day, but obviously those are important elements that we have to discuss. Some serious choices have to be made at the end of the day, when you have an education budget that has increased by more than \$8 billion since 2003 and we have almost 300,000 fewer students in the system. What has transpired? Why is that the case? I think we're going to have some great debates in the future about how we deal with that particular issue and that particular problem. That's one of the tasks that I'll certainly be charged with going forward as the new PC critic.

At the same time, Madam Speaker, as the new critic I do leave, at least partially, a critic portfolio that I truly had a passion for, which was the critic portfolio for training, colleges and universities. I do want to state on the record that I enjoyed immensely the opportunity to speak to a variety of stakeholders in that portfolio who helped shape the white paper that I helped author, our Paths to Prosperity document Higher Learning for Better Jobs, which is also a document I feel very strongly about: how we can actually get our children who are going through the education system and primary and secondary schools into a post-secondary education field that will ultimately provide them with the gainful employment that I think every parent desires. So I think this is a great place to start with respect to my interest in this area, my interest that is shaped by the conversations that I've had since I've been elected as the MPP for Cambridge and appointed the critic for training, colleges and universities.

I am very excited to begin this new task as a critic for the Ontario PC Party and our leader Tim Hudak, because I think we have a lot to say about education, certainly in the course of debating this bill, and we'll have some debates going forward as well.

Madam Speaker, I want to first start off by suggesting that as a father of three young boys—I had a conversation with my wife about this, actually, last night. She read a media report last week when the bill was introduced about what the content of the bill was. She said, after reading the article, that she found it a little strange, as a parent—she's not overtly political, by nature; she leaves that task up to me—but she said to me, “I read the article

on that, and something seemed a little off to it. Can you tell me what the bill is about?" So I began to explain what the bill was actually about—at least as I knew it at about 8 p.m. last night. I actually know a lot more by 8 a.m. this morning, because I had to do my homework, given the hour lead that I've been given today. But one of the things that struck her as being a little odd was the fact that there was a five-year reinstatement policy for folks who have been tasked with misconduct and potentially sexual abuse in the classroom. She thought that that five-year reinstatement policy was a little bizarre. If you actually are subject to and penalized for engaging in that kind of misconduct, her belief as a mother was that you shouldn't be allowed to teach anymore.

We have questions about some of those issues, and I understand the bill tries to address the differences between what the college is supposed to do and what the school board and the employer are supposed to do, but these are the kinds of points that, once we put them out in the public realm, folks obviously have questions about. We have to have some indication, some response, about how we're going to deal with those issues.

That one, as well, struck me as being a little interesting, perhaps a little odd, that we would allow a provision for someone who has participated in any kind of sexual misconduct back into the classroom at all. I would hope, as a parent, as a father of three boys, that the answer in most cases is no. We have a responsibility to protect our kids, and that's what this legislation is supposed to do. I would hope that as we discuss and debate and deliberate over this piece of legislation, we actually think about that. I don't know what it's like to have been subjected to that kind of misconduct. I am not a student who actually has gone through that, but I know that students who have had those incidences of misconduct and inappropriate sexual misconduct have life-long issues that they will deal with—mental health issues in particular.

I would suggest at the very start, before we get into the meat and potatoes of this piece of legislation, that we actually talk about and focus on exactly what we're doing here to protect our kids. We should do whatever it takes to make sure that the teacher in front of the classroom is not going to be tempted by having these young people at their doorstep, basically, Madam Speaker. We have the responsibility to our kids to talk about what this reinstatement policy is. I'm sure that throughout the course of debate I'm probably going to learn a bit more about what that means in the larger scheme of things. I would have to hope that even if the reinstatement does occur, our schools and our school boards are also not subjected to hiring these people. I think there are going to be background checks that school boards and employers will obviously perform on these teachers, that they are subjected to that, Madam Speaker.

Which brings me to another point that I think the member from Nepean–Carleton put forth very vocally last week, which is her private member's bill to deal with what the member from Northumberland–Quinte West

had talked about: to ensure we have the best teachers in front of our classroom and providing the principals with the tools for doing so. We know that regulation 274/12 has an effect on the hiring practices of our schools and our school boards. We feel that the greatest indicator of whether someone should get a job or not is that the most qualified person for that job sees the day. I know that current practice has been challenged lately by this regulation.

I remember very early on in my tenure, I guess, as the MPP for Cambridge meeting with a group of principals who talked about their challenges in hiring teachers to fulfill their particular needs. For example, Madam Speaker, I remember going to a high school and meeting with the principal there—I think it was a vice-principal, actually—who talked about how she had a very good teacher, an occasional teacher, who was the coach of the volleyball team or the hockey team; I can't remember what. But the season spanned both semesters and the occasional teacher was to end in February. In the course of ending in February, for the second semester that teacher would no longer be the coach of that sports team, which then defaults, in that case—the principal actually has to take over that sports team or that sports team has to fold.

If we don't arm our principals with the ability to fill those particular teaching needs, I think we are doing a disservice not only to qualified teachers but to students who have a desire to participate in extracurricular activities that only some teachers can perform. So we have to be cognizant of the environment in which we're making these decisions. I think we have to do our utmost to ensure that the principals in our schools have the tools necessary to hire the appropriate teacher and to fit the needs of that school, and that also includes doing appropriate screens with the appropriate investigations, whether it's done by the college or the school board, or the police in certain instances where criminal activity is involved; we have to ensure that the principal has the tools to actually make the decision that's appropriate for their school.

**0950**

So while 274/12 in the legislation brought forth by the member for Nepean–Carleton does talk about hiring the best teachers in the classroom to do the job that I think everyone wants in the school, it actually applies in this case, too: that we want to, to the greatest extent possible, arm our principals with the tools necessary to hire the teachers who meet their particular needs at that school, whether that teacher is at the highest end of the seniority list or the lowest end of the seniority list. What I have a lot of interest in particularly is the fact that we currently have a lot of young teachers who have gone through their education and aren't able to find work, and we have a lot of students who are faced with this task. We have a mismatch, in essence, with the production of graduates from our teacher colleges with what's happening in the labour market. I think there has to be some mechanism by which we address that concern, because it's hard to



tell a student who wants to be a teacher, who has a passion for being a teacher, that they might not get a job in the province of Ontario due to some of the policies that are taking place right here.

So we have a lot of work to do. The member for Durham talked about how there are a number of members on this side of the Legislature who are teachers. I know that the member for Northumberland—Quinte West was a fine teacher before entering politics. I know that the member for Durham and my seatmate from Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry and the member for Prince Edward—Hastings—we are all related to or married to people in the education field. Prior to entering politics, I was also an educator—perhaps not in the same way as my friend from Northumberland—Quinte West was, but I was a university professor prior to entering politics, and I share that love of teaching, that passion for teaching. I miss it dearly.

Forgive me, members of the Legislature, if this sounds like a university lecture. I hope that I am at least providing some level of interest to the debate, because—

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's not bad.

**Mr. Rob Leone:** The member for Kitchener—Waterloo actually says it's not bad. I think that's a great compliment coming from her, so we'll keep going at that.

On that note from the member for Kitchener—Waterloo, in her remarks that she just provided to the Minister of Education I did note a very interesting seminar that's taking place in the region that's talking about radically altering the scope of education in the province of Ontario and how, rather than being behind the curve, we have to actually be ahead of the curve. I think those kinds of discussions are very appropriate to how we teach the child in the 21st century, particularly the child whose attention span, in the mass media market, is shrinking at an exponential rate—much like members of this Legislature, I might add, who may or may not be listening to this enlightening discussion that I'm providing today. Given the fact that very few people actually laughed and raised their heads at that, I can guarantee that the attention span is actually quite low here. But that's okay; that's fine. I'm sure they can read the Hansard or download the YouTube video later on to hear the comments that the new critic for education in the PC Party has to say about this.

The concept of engagement—I think the member for Kitchener—Waterloo was at the summit, but I did read a lot that came from it. The question of engagement is actually a very pertinent one to this discussion as well. We want to ensure that we have the best teachers in our classrooms. We want to make sure that that teacher is qualified, which is why we have the Ontario College of Teachers and we had an act that was established to promote that idea. This act obviously strengthens the components of that piece of legislation. But that question of engagement is paramount—how we ensure that we're engaging children in the future.

I'm actually very interested in this, Madam Speaker, because just last night I was talking to a constituent who

was complaining—an older gentleman, mind you—about how either the child or the grandchild is no longer learning cursive writing, is no longer talking about or learning the times tables. This shocks me. I don't know if it's actually true or not. I do want to seek some answers on whether we are abandoning what I think a lot of parents actually want, which is their children to read, write and do math.

But we're talking about the old form of education, and yet we have a seminar taking place almost next door to where this constituent lives, talking about the engagement, the challenges of a 21st-century education. How do we harness technology in that? What is the entrepreneur of the future going to look like? All of these are pertinent questions that I think a lot of parents would like some answers to, which is why I think the Minister of Education would agree that this is a very exciting field to be in and to debate and discuss.

Now, I read with interest, in doing my homework after 8 p.m. last night—I did have the opportunity to read the report by the Honourable Patrick LeSage, which was called the Review of the Ontario College of Teachers Intake, Investigation and Discipline Procedures and Outcomes, and the Dispute Resolution Program.

So I guess the judge, or the former judge, is not an expert at crafting good political titles like the short name of this bill, when you have a title of the Review of the Ontario College of Teachers Intake, Investigation and Discipline Procedures and Outcomes, and the Dispute Resolution Program.

Right away—

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** "Protecting Students" is so much simpler.

**Mr. Rob Leone:** The Minister of Education states that the Protecting Students Act is so much simpler—and it is; it sounds nice—rather than the—what's the official bill title here? I have it here, which is An Act to amend the Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996 with respect to discipline and other related matters. So you know the lawyer wrote that title, and the minister's communication director wrote the other one. We're good with that.

I thought, when I read the title—and you're never supposed to—I know, when you're younger, you're told never to judge a book by its cover. Well, I have to say, thank goodness I didn't judge this report by its cover, because if I had just read the title and it wasn't part of my homework, I probably wouldn't have read it.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** It's a good report.

**Mr. Rob Leone:** It is a good report.

One of the things that I like about what Justice LeSage has done is that he actually talked about some of the other self-regulated bodies that we have established and have a long history of in the province of Ontario, and looked at the Ontario College of Teachers to see how the two could link and if we could have best practices and learn what other organizations are doing and try to infuse those ideas in this legislation, which I think is a positive step.

For example, he has consulted the College of Nurses of Ontario, the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of

Ontario, the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario and has consulted the CEO and a number of benchers of the Law Society of Upper Canada. So, obviously, there's a lot of discussion between the regulated professions, that have a long history—and some of the ideas that other pieces of legislation talk about and discuss were certainly listed in his—what is it?—70-some-odd-page report.

I actually learned quite a bit about the College of Teachers, and I have to say I'm much more informed today than I was even last evening about the contents of what has been discussed.

One of the things I think is very important, in terms of understanding, in terms of the history of the Ontario College of Teachers, is that this process of trying to modernize our self-regulation of the teaching profession is actually quite—there's a long history of that, and one that actually involves all three political parties.

In 1993, I think, the Ontario government commissioned—has a Royal Commission on Learning, and the stated goal of that royal commission was to ensure the Ontario youth are well prepared for the challenges of the 21st century.

I don't think there is a member of this Legislature who wouldn't agree that we have to do our utmost to ensure that youth are well prepared for the challenges of the 21st century. I'm not quite sure the adults are prepared for what's going to happen in the 21st century, but I'm pretty sure our youth are going to adapt well.

**1000**  
In December 1994, after extensive public consultation, the commission completed its report. You can tell that there was a good spinner writing the title of this report; it's called *For the Love of Learning*.

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** That's crazy.

**Mr. Rob Leone:** Isn't that interesting?

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Rob Leone:** I like that title. It appeals to my inner sensibilities. Who wouldn't want to ensure that students have a love of learning? Unfortunately, I didn't have time to pull that report out in preparation for this discussion today, but I am grateful for the fact that, at some level, LeSage actually did try to highlight some of the pertinent points, and I think some of those pertinent points are worth discussing here.

Let me just take a couple of excerpts: "The commission believes that the teaching profession in Ontario must now be considered equal to other established professions." It's funny that we had to wait till 1994 to actually state what I think is obvious to a lot of people, that the teaching profession should be equal to other professions. In fact, these are people who are shaping the hearts and minds of our children.

They should be, in essence, trying to ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, we treat teachers with the respect that they deserve. Certainly, we feel very strongly about that because, obviously, the outcome of this report was the creation of the Ontario College of Teachers,

which was established by a PC government. So we take the words here quite well.

It suggests here that "Structures such as the Ontario Teachers' Federation and its affiliates are in place to protect the economic interests and workplace rights of teachers." No one suggests that we should seek otherwise.

They also respond to some of the professional development needs of teachers but not to the need to develop the profession of teaching itself, which is why we have the Ontario College of Teachers.

It goes on to suggest that, "In order to promote teaching to full professional status, we propose that a professional self-regulatory body, a College of Teachers, be established. The college would be responsible for determining standards of teaching practice, regulating initial and ongoing teacher certification and accrediting teacher education programs, both pre-service preparation and ongoing professional development."

Now, I know the act was established some years ago: The act, in terms of going through that, was introduced as Bill 31 in 1995 and received royal assent in 1996. But there obviously needs to be a place where we discuss teaching as a profession and the promotion thereof. I know from when I was a university professor that that's one of the things we actually still struggle with. How do we ensure that these fantastic researchers are in a position to actually transmit that knowledge to students? There seems to be a need; we should talk about how university professors or college professors can actually do that in their day-to-day activities. It's actually a topic that we talked about at the university level—and we talk in the high schools and our secondary schools—starting in the 1990s, which I think was quite remarkable in itself.

"A majority of members of the college would be professional educators selected by their peers, but there would be substantial representation from the public, that is, non-educators." So the College of Teachers was initially designed to have representation from the teachers, the teaching profession, and the public at large. So there would be some joint membership in the committee. Obviously I think that speaks to a need that legislation on the report actually talks about as well, which is to protect the public interest. Protecting the public interest obviously is a valuable asset that we have to make sure happens and exists always. Having non-educators as part of the Ontario College of Teachers has been one of the mainstays of the legislation.

Now I know that, over time, particularly with the change in government that happened and the Liberal government taking power, they wanted to change the composition of the Ontario College of Teachers and, in fact, did change that composition to include more teachers, more educators, in the composition of the college. That was with heavy discussion with stakeholders in the education field—with teachers' unions and so on and so forth. Even though the legislation does, as I understand it, make sure that a member of union leadership can't actually be part of the College of Teachers—they actually have to resign their role as part of a union—the fact is



that more teachers were desired to be part of this college to shape its course and so on. That happened probably about eight years ago.

We are now faced with the discussion of whether the public interest has been maintained. I think there are certain questions of whether that is the case. I think the fact that we're actually seeing this piece of legislation come forward speaks to the need to make the whole College of Teachers much more robust than it may have otherwise been. I noticed that the ebbs and flows of what happens have changed and evolved over time, and that, I think, is a very important component of what we're dealing with here. Ultimately, we provide or produce self-regulating bodies to ensure that teachers are making decisions about teachers and that we have other people involved that aren't teachers to protect the public interest. I think that's a very valuable thing. I certainly would have loved to and probably will desire to read more in terms of why that changed—in 2006, I believe. But I think it's very important to actually understand and enumerate some of those ideas going forward.

There's much more in the report, Madam Speaker, that I could discuss, but I do want to perhaps—I don't have a whole lot of time left in the deliberations today. In total, the report talked about 49 different recommendations, which are a lot of recommendations that have come forward in this report. These recommendations are far-reaching; I read all of them. They either can be produced through regulatory changes in the bylaws of the Ontario College of Teachers or they have to be legislated. I think that's why we see this particular piece of legislation come forward: because they're responding to those recommendations that need to be addressed.

Some of the key provisions that we've seen and discussed—for example, ensuring that a teacher's certificate is automatically revoked if they have been found guilty of specified acts of sexual abuse or for acts relating to child pornography. The recommendation is for five years, at which point the teacher can then reapply. As I stated in my initial comments to this bill, these are in fact one of the first questions that I think people of the public are going to ask: Is this five-year requirement the requirement that is necessary? Should we allow people who are perhaps involved in child pornography the ability to teach again? Should we revoke that right permanently? I think members of the public are certainly going to have a debate about that. I would hesitate to speak on behalf of my caucus, but I think that that's the role I have now. But I'm sure lots of members of my caucus are going to raise some issues, particularly in relation to that five-year period.

Another point that this piece of legislation establishes is publishing all decisions of the college's discipline committee. In an era of open disclosure, I think it's prudent to make sure that we actually know what has happened, what has transpired. I know the legislation talks about the notice period, an appropriate length of time between the notice being issued and the decision rendered. I think it's up to 120 days. There are lots of ins

and outs in terms of the timelines. I think that there's going to be discussion about that, as with all pieces of legislation that establish certain timelines. We're going to have questions about those timelines. Should they be rendered quickly? Should they understand whether 42 days or 100 days, whether it's business days, whether it's calendar days, whether all of that is sufficient time to complete the investigation of whether misconduct does in fact exist or, on the flip side of that, to ensure that the student and his or her family has the appropriate resolution in a more meaningful and manageable timeline? If we think about it, if the length of time is 120 days between the start and end of this procedure—I know there are lots of different dates and times in the Legislature for different acts—but if that timeline is established, that is a semester of school. That's a long time for a student to wait, and I would hate for a student, who has frankly been sidelined because they don't want to go back to a school because of the potential emotional and psychological despair that they may be in, to wait four months for a resolution to a case to occur. It might seem to be a little much.

So I know as we go forward and debate this piece of legislation which we, in principle, agree with, we are going to obviously seek to make certain amendments and debate in committee these kinds of provisions.

The bill also does a particular job of outlining clear rules for the use of an alternative dispute resolution process in confirming that no cases involving sexual abuse, sexual misconduct or child pornography will be eligible for alternative dispute resolution. In essence, what that means is that these are serious issues that have to be investigated thoroughly and within the dispute resolution mechanisms that the bill ascribes to, which I think is a good aspect because obviously these kinds of acts are ones that seriously affect the social and emotional well-being—and sometimes the physical well-being—of our children. So we actually have to talk about this in very meaningful ways.

The act does a particular job in clarifying when school boards must inform the Ontario College of Teachers of cases where the board has restricted the duties of a teacher or dismissed them for misconduct. One of the things that I found very interesting, in the course of reviewing the legislation and the report, is the seeming lack of communication between the school board and the Ontario College of Teachers. We would hope that that kind of communication actually is facilitated rather than hindered in any particular way. If this legislation is necessary to foster that area of communication, we have, I think, a responsibility to support that issue because we need to have those lines of communication established. That shouldn't be distracted by any other particular issue that might arise. Whether that issue deals with a criminal proceeding, whether that issue has to do with minor offences, but certainly what we have to do is make sure that those lines of communication between the school boards and the Ontario College of Teachers remain totally intact.

Another aspect is allowing the Ontario College of Teachers to take swift action and share information with the school board if it is determined that the subject of the complaint may pose immediate risk to a student. Madam Speaker, one thing that I'm shocked about is that such a provision in 2013 actually has to be implemented in legislation. Why does this not exist already? I'm shocked, as a parent, that we actually have to legislate this today when it should have been in the books far, far, far into the past, or long, long, long ago, if you like that better, in terms of my 10 a.m. English this morning.

Why are we sitting here in 2013 talking about making sure that we're doing everything we can to make sure that information is shared to the appropriate people in order to protect our children? I find that astonishing and remarkable—I think, Madam Speaker, you're about to stand up and make me sit down. You can do so at any time, and I will be happy to oblige.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** It being almost 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30.

*The House recessed from 1014 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, I want to again recognize friends from the federation of co-operative housing, Ontario, here. I recognize, of course, Harvey Cooper, who is here, I believe. The federation is hosting a reception this evening, I believe in the legislative dining room, and I encourage all members to attend that.

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I appreciate that the Minister of Labour stole my thunder about my guest today, but I would like to formally welcome Harvey Cooper, Simone Swail and Denise McGahan. They're here today at Queen's Park for the co-operative housing day, and they will be hosting a reception in committee rooms 228 and 230. I would encourage all of you to come and hear about the great work that the Co-operative Housing Federation is doing for the people of Ontario, and I know that my critics will be there to speak as well, so it will be a wonderful evening. I implore all of you to come.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I am very pleased to introduce all visitors from Rethink Breast Cancer who are joining us today, including M.J. DeCoteau, the executive director; Alison Gordon, the vice-president; Ashley Mac Isaac-Butler, senior advocacy manager; and Silvana Langley, a volunteer. Welcome to all of you.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I would like to invite all the members of the Legislature out to the front lawn after question period today. The 64th National Day for the People's Republic of China is occurring. We'll have a flag-raising out there. I'd like to welcome Consul General Fang Li as well to Queen's Park today. So if we can encourage all the members of the Legislature to make their way out to the front lawn after question period, that would be appreciated.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm sure everyone heard that announcement about the flag-raising for the People's Republic of China.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### JOB CREATION

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, we met in your office several weeks ago. It was very kind of you to invite me to meet with you. You put a list of bills on the table. You said that if we could agree upon these bills that both parties support, we could basically clear the decks so we could get to work on jobs and the economy. I agreed to that, and the programming motion is now well under way.

I guess I'm a bit frustrated here because we did our share of the deal. We're moving forward with the bills. We opened up now the decks for jobs legislation, but the only thing we see from you so far is an online plea for ideas on jobs and the economy. So I guess I'll ask you directly, Premier: Why are you shying away from your end of the deal? Effectively, why are you reneging on your commitment to act on jobs and the economy?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the Leader of the Opposition, and I hope that this question signals that he will be supporting our initiatives, such as the Supporting Small Businesses Act, which will help 60,000 small businesses by helping them with their payroll taxes. I hope that it signals that the Leader of the Opposition will support our social enterprise initiative, which should create 1,600 new jobs. I hope that it means that the Leader of the Opposition will support our investments when we make investments like the \$70.9 million in Ford that will protect 2,800 jobs and create a platform that will allow Ford to be able to compete globally and increase their capacity.

I hope that the Leader of the Opposition's question signals that he will be supporting those initiatives, including the initiative yesterday that I worked with the Toronto Region Board of Trade on to increase the agri-food sector. I hope he's going to be supporting us.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** It's unfortunate, as I said, Speaker, that the only ideas the Premier has put on the table are warmed-over NDP ideas that came through the 1-800-Horwath line the last time around. She has now launched her own website consultation. We need a plan.

One thing I always enjoyed with my grandparents in beautiful Sarnia, Ontario, was playing euchre with my grandparents—a lot of fun. I learned that reneging was against the rules. That was just a game. Reneging in a real-life deal has real-world consequences. This means young people are not being put to work. It means companies are passing over Ontario.

Premier, it's time to get on with the job of creating jobs in the province of Ontario. If you're out of ideas,



why don't you take some of ours and put people into good jobs in the province of Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment is going to want to speak to some of the specifics.

But I want to just react to what the Leader of the Opposition talked about. In fact, the Conservative Party, when we put forward a proposal that a couple of bills that are job-creating, the Supporting Small Businesses Act and the Waste Diversion Act—both of which will directly create jobs. We suggested that those be put in the programming motion, and they said no. They said they didn't want to have anything to do with two bills that are direct job creators.

The Leader of the Opposition has thrown into his questions in the last couple of days the notion that somehow, as we create jobs, because of the work that we're doing on those pieces of legislation—and the investments that we're making are creating jobs—it's not okay to be asking the people of Ontario to engage with us and talk to us about what other ideas they might have. I reject that notion categorically. I think it's our responsibility to talk to the people of Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** But, Premier, your idea is to increase red tape, increase tax and increase spending. That's what drove us into the ditch in the first place. So of course we're going to say no to those ideas. But I hope you'll say yes to some of ours.

What I'm perplexed with is why you're reneging on your side of the deal. I don't understand what the paralysis is. I don't understand what the deadlock is.

Why aren't you moving forward with a jobs plan? We put our plan on the table. In fact, I invite you to steal any of our ideas—for example, to stop the Green Energy Act, the imposition of wind turbines that are dividing communities and driving up hydro rates; to change the way apprenticeship works in this province and put young people into good jobs, like Garfield Dunlop has recommended.

There are so many ideas. Why don't we actually move forward on one together to put people back to work? Why are you reneging on the deal that we made?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I appreciate that the Leader of the Opposition met with me. I appreciate that we had a conversation about some bills where we might have agreement and we could move forward.

But what I did not commit to was slashing jobs. I did not commit to cutting programs and stopping the progress that we've made on renewable energy, on education, on health care. I never committed to that, because that is the plan that the Leader of the Opposition is putting forward. I never—I never—would agree to such a plan, because what we believe is that investing in people,

investing in infrastructure and supporting a business climate that allows businesses to expand is how we get the economy cooking. That's working, Mr. Speaker. Jobs are being created in the province.

#### PAN AM GAMES

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, recently we learned that top-paid Pan Am executives had run amok with expense claims in bad faith, claims without receipts and incomplete claims. You indicated this was unacceptable and that rules needed to be strengthened. Premier, that's rich. You knew these were the rules. You made these rules, and you stood by while the rules were abused for years. Don't just be disappointed and have a conversation with these people; get the money back, Premier.

Premier, tell me when a review of all TO2015 expense claims will commence, and when the executives will be ordered to repay all their bad-faith claims back.

1040

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I said yesterday that it was unacceptable, some of the expenses that had been reported. The minister responsible for the Pan/Parapan Am Games had already directed the board to tighten the rules. I've said that it wasn't acceptable; I've said that it needed to change, and it is changing.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew will not use the moment while I'm getting quiet. Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** As I said, this happened before these reports came out. The minister had already spoken to the board, and the rules are being changed. As I said yesterday, if there were breaches of the rules and if there is reimbursement that needs to happen, we will ask for that to happen.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Clearly, there is no evidence that the minister ever did have a conversation with anyone about expenses there. If you follow the pennies, you'll find the dollars. The bad-faith expense claims are indicative of a much greater endemic problem at the upper levels and the upper echelon of the Pan Am organizational structure—entitlement. Indeed, there are tens of thousands of dollars that have been burned partying in lavish hospitality suites and jaunts to Mexico and Guadalajara and London. When I FOI'd the minister for all expenses on these trips, including travel, we received an incomplete response, only with flight itineraries—an act of bad faith, Premier.

To be clear, this isn't about Starbucks or dog travel or parking; this is nickel-and-diming, and it's just the tip of the iceberg. That's why, Premier, you must intervene. When will you set an example from the top and order repayment of all bad-faith expenses and expenses outside of the rules?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport is going to want to speak

to this, but I want to say, as I said yesterday, that the reports of these kinds of decisions and these kinds of expenses are unacceptable. The minister had already acted before these reports came out so that the rules had to be tightened and that they had to be changed, and that is happening.

What I did say yesterday is that I make a distinction between these kinds of abuses of the rules and the fact that in order to land these games, there did need to be travel. There did need to be trips to Guadalajara in order to get these games, because we know that these games are going to be a great opportunity for Ontario, for Ontario athletes and for job creation—26,000 jobs—and we want to make them the best that they can be.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplement-ary.

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Clearly, everyone is scrambling today for the best excuse for this binge-spending by Pan Am executives. Just today, Premier, your own minister practically abdicated responsibility for the games in estimates. The TO2015 executives themselves will tell you that the government knew and approved the guidelines for expenses. The Pan Am minister will tell you that the executives followed policy but not common sense. The Premier will tell you that we need to tighten the rules—a day late and a dollar short. Everyone is so busy backpedalling that they've actually lost sight of who they serve: the hard-working families of Ontario whose money has been exploited.

Enough is enough, Premier. When will you order repayment of all bad-faith expenses? When will it happen?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Enough is enough.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Yes, I agree with you: Enough is enough, the member from Leeds–Grenville. You set it up; I knock it down.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Thank you very much for the question, and the opposition honourable member. This morning we started our estimates. It was five hours, and we engaged in a very fruitful conversation for one and a half hours of that, so this is good. We will be answering more questions from the critic over there. I wish he'd also listen to our explanations, other than just keep asking questions without really listening to the answers, or refusing those answers.

In terms of the reimbursement, I think we answered this question already. The Premier just said that under the Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive, TO2015 must establish rules for all individuals in the organization with respect to—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** —travel, meals—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Minister, when I stand, you sit.

New question.

## COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. After dodging our questions for days, the Premier admitted yesterday that her staff met with Liberal lobbyists hired by EllisDon to pass legislation on behalf of their company. Can the Premier tell us when those meetings actually occurred and who attended on her behalf?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I don't know exactly when the meetings took place. What I said yesterday was that we meet with a range of people from across all sectors, as, I assume, does the leader of the third party, so I cannot give the leader of the third party the time and date. In fact, I never denied that those meetings took place, and I recognize that if the leader of the third party wants times and dates, I can undertake to get those for her.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please. I'm going to nip this in the bud. The member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, the Minister of Rural Affairs and the Minister of the Environment will cease holding up any kind of prop. It stops now.

Supplementary question?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I believe we would like those dates, Speaker, and so would the people of Ontario.

Yesterday, the Minister of Labour told reporters that he had told EllisDon lobbyists that he didn't have anything to say to them because it would be inappropriate to discuss a matter that was before the courts.

Why did the Premier's team agree to such a meeting? The minister's wouldn't.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Again, Mr. Speaker, I will just say that in government and in opposition, there are many people in the province who want to speak to us about issues of concern to them. There are meetings that happen every single day in this place and in our offices, where people with concerns come to us. They raise issues, and they propose solutions; they propose paths forward. Some of those paths forward are adopted, and others are not. Sometimes a private member's bill is developed as a result of some of those meetings, and sometimes there is nothing that happens as a result of those meetings. But the responsibility of politicians is to meet with people to hear their concerns and to determine if there's a way we can facilitate a response or whether there's actually nothing that we can do. I hope that the leader of the third party understands that that's all of our responsibility.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplement-ary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** On September 9, the Premier told reporters that she supported Bill 74, and she seemed very well briefed with EllisDon's talking points on that bill. She said, "This is an anomalous situation. The situation arose in the 1950s.... From my perspective it's about a level playing field."

Now, if the Minister of Labour thought it was inappropriate to comment on an issue before the courts, why was the Premier commenting on it?



**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I was outlining my understanding of what the issue was. I was not taking a position in terms of the court case. I was outlining my understanding of the situation, Mr. Speaker. That was and is my understanding.

There has now been a court ruling that we're reviewing. There's a 15-day appeal period. As that process unfolds, we will see where the legislation goes.

I have at no time put myself in a position where I was interfering with a court case, Mr. Speaker. I was outlining my understanding of the situation, and I think the leader of the third party knows full well that that was the situation.

### COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also for the Premier. It seems that the Premier and her office were all too eager to sit down with Liberal insiders working for EllisDon even though the Minister of Labour thought it would be completely inappropriate.

Can the Premier tell us whether she or anyone on her team made a commitment to pass a bill as long as it was introduced by another political party?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I spoke to this issue yesterday. The leader of the third party is seeing conspiracy where there is none, because there was no such arrangement. This was a private member's bill that was put up by the opposition. Members debated the bill in the House from all parties, and we comment on legislation. We comment on the substance of legislation. That's what we've commented on. That's how the situation arose. Now, the Divisional Court has made a decision. There is a 15-day period in which there could be an appeal, and we are reviewing the decision of the Divisional Court.

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**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Gee, Speaker, a conspiracy between the Liberals and the Conservatives to ram through legislation for one company—who would have thought it?

People have serious, serious questions about this government's priorities. The government keeps blindly pressing on trying to ram this bill through the Legislature on behalf of one single company, a well-connected company at that, even while their arguments for doing so fall apart before their eyes.

Ontario families are looking for life to get more affordable for them. They're looking for jobs for the young people in those families. They're looking for the health care system to be there for them when they need it. Does the Premier really think that one well-connected donor should come ahead of those families?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm trying to just get at what this is really about. I think what we're talking about is the programming motion. I think that's what the problem is here for the leader of the third party. As we have said, the Divisional Court has made a ruling that we're reviewing. There's a 15-day appeal period, but

there seems to be a ruling that is in place now. So I think that, really, what is at issue here is whether the leader of the third party and her members would be interested and supportive of a programming motion that would actually move ahead some pieces of legislation, like the Local Food Act, like the act that would protect young kids from tanning beds. If the leader of the third party and her members would support those pieces of legislation as part of the programming motion, then I think that would be a good thing for the people of Ontario. She doesn't seem to want to sign onto that and work with us on those pieces of legislation.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** There are pressing, pressing issues that face the people of this province. They're worried about jobs. They're worried about health care. They're worried about the cost of everyday life, which keeps going up and up and up for them. Instead of delivering for those people, the Premier seems determined to deliver for one well-connected company even while she frantically denies that she's doing so.

Is the Premier ready to stop these games and shenanigans, admit this bill is not a priority for the people who are facing tough times in this province, and stop her efforts to ram it through this Legislature?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I believe that the 2,800 people who work for Ford are very pleased that we made that \$70.9-million investment. I believe that the 535 young people who are going to have placements as a result of the Youth Employment Fund are very pleased with what that accomplishes. I think that the 60,000 small businesses that would benefit from the small business act that would help with their payroll taxes are very pleased with that legislation, because that will give them the opportunity to hire more people.

I would have thought that the leader of the third party would have been supportive of those initiatives and that she would have wanted to work with us, because those are job-creating initiatives and they are moving forward, and that's our priority on this side of the House.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. New question.

### HYDRO RATES

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** My question is to the Premier. Tomorrow, when your government marks 10 years in office, Ontario taxpayers—

*Applause.*

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** You may want to stop the clapping, because Ontario ratepayers and taxpayers are going to be lamenting the high and skyrocketing costs of hydro in this province.

When you release, later this fall, your new long-term energy plan for the province, you're going to have to make up for the enormous amount of credibility that you've lost, particularly with the Green Energy Act and,

of course, now with both of these cancelled power plants that the Auditor General will report on later.

So the question that I have for you is a simple one, Premier, and it's one I expect a direct response on: Before the new long-term energy plan is tabled, will you assure us in this assembly that you will do a cost calculation of what those cancelled gas plants, as well as the Green Energy Act, have cost Ontario taxpayers on their hydro bill per month for the last 10 years?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I remember, and I think everyone here will remember, in 2002-03, when we were campaigning, we didn't know when the election was going to be called. It was on again, off again. But I remember how unstable the electricity system was. I remember the brownouts; I remember the blackouts. I remember that when we came into office—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. Order. The member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke will come to order, as will everyone in the House.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister, you always find that perfect moment, so I will give you the attention you're asking for. The minister responsible for seniors' affairs will come to order.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The party opposite howls, but we have rebuilt over 80% of our electricity system, because it was in disarray.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Cambridge, come to order.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** We have a stable supply. We've jump-started a green energy industry. They'd like to slash that; they'd like to kill those jobs, Mr. Speaker—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. I shall give those people who want attention the attention. The member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke is warned.

Wrap up, please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I was done.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I'd like to welcome the Premier to 2013. Her government has been in power for a decade and hydro rates have tripled on their watch because, on their long-term energy planning, they've either ignored it completely by saying they're going build power plants and then cancelling, or coming to this very chamber and promising 50,000 jobs from a green energy plan that has cost Ontario taxpayers and rural communities a lot of money.

This government has a lot to answer for. Before they bring forward that next long-term energy plan before the assembly and before the people of Ontario, I have asked

her directly, and I will do it one more time: Will she go to the people of this province and tell them exactly how much that Green Energy Act has cost them on their power bill, will she tell them how much those two cancelled gas plants will cost them on their hydro bill and will she do it immediately?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Excuse me. As I begin to sit down, people begin to ramp it back up again. Both sides are making comments before I even sit down.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think the member opposite knows full well that the issues around the cost of the gas plants—we've had a report from the Auditor General on Mississauga, the report on Oakville is coming forward and we will continue to have that discussion.

But I think the member opposite should remember that if we talk about going to the people of Ontario and talking about what's actually happening, when the PCs capped energy prices in 2002, it caused energy prices to spike 30% in 30 weeks, and that created a \$7-billion stranded debt. So when you talk about being honest with the people of Ontario and talking about what costs really are, that's what we're doing, Mr. Speaker. That is not what the party opposite has done. And on the long-term—

*Interjections.*

**Interjection:** You're done.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Okay. I'm done; you're right.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. While someone is giving an answer, if that happens, that's their time. Then, when that time is up, you don't get any more time; your time is up.

New question.

## PAN AM GAMES

**Mr. Paul Miller:** My question is to the Premier. Yesterday the Premier reacted with apparent shock to news about the Pan Am Games' outrageous expenses. But in an interview, Ian Troop, the CEO of the Pan Am Games, insisted that the government knew and approved of the guidelines for expenses and salaries. This morning, the minister said that the government did not approve these, but the board did.

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Speaker, can the Premier explain who has the full set of books with every expense listed, who approved these expenses and salaries, and to whom the Pan Am board actually does or should report?



**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** TO2015, the operations side, reports to the board, and the board of the Pan Am Games consists of five partners: provincial, federal, municipal, and also the sector, which is the Canadian Olympic Committee as well as the Paralympic committee.

The board approved those expenses, and also the board implements those policies and provides guidance and guidelines for those expenses.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Speaker, this is sadly not the first time this government has faced questions of inappropriate spending of taxpayer dollars. We still remember eHealth and Ornge. This government has allowed the Pan Am Games to operate outside the expense rules and accountability that should apply to the expenditure of all Ontario tax dollars. The minister passed the blame to the board today, acting as an independent transfer agent, as though taxpayer dollars were not at stake—just like eHealth, Ornge and the gas plants.

Has this government learned nothing over the last few years? Can the Premier tell Ontarians why they should trust her government any more than they would trust the McGuinty Liberals with their hard-earned tax dollars?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Let me clarify here: The broader public service expense directive requires designated organizations to establish expense rules where expenses are reimbursed from public funds. These expense rules do not have to be the same as those required by government agencies and ministries within the Ontario public service.

The province's financial oversight of TO2015 includes administering the transfer payment agreement, review and approval of TO2015's business plan, reporting from TO2015, and auditing compliance with provincial directives.

## SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** Mr. Speaker, my question, through you, is to the Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment.

Minister, our government has outlined a strong plan for jobs and growth that includes investing in people and infrastructure and creating the right conditions for businesses to grow and stay in Ontario. We all know that social entrepreneurship represents a sustainable way to build a diverse and vibrant economy. This includes people who live in my riding of Scarborough Southwest, who I know will also benefit from the investments our government is making. My residents have already seen the work our government is doing through the Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs, which serves my constituents.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment, could the minister please update this House on the government's recent social enterprise strategy announcement?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I thank the member from Scarborough Southwest for his question. Social enterprises

are for-profit and not-for-profit entities that are run like businesses but have as their overarching goal contributing to the social good and creating a better society. Ontarians are global leaders when it comes to social enterprise. There are roughly 10,000 social enterprises in the province today, employing more than 150,000 people.

Last week, the government announced a three-year, \$25-million social enterprise strategy to help build the sector in Ontario. A portion of that funding will be used to create a new \$4-million social enterprise demonstration fund to support early-stage social enterprises.

The strategy will benefit Ontarians by creating thousands of new jobs, particularly for youth and other populations that have traditionally had barriers to employment. In partnership with the social enterprise sector, our aim is to make Ontario the leading jurisdiction in North America for social enterprise.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** I want to thank the minister for his response. It's great to hear that social entrepreneurs will have access to the right funding opportunities and support across this province. It is important that people across the province can depend on a sustainable economy, for, as you said, Minister, it's about investing in people and infrastructure and creating the right business climate for companies to come and grow in Ontario.

When I speak to constituents in my riding, they say our government needs to continue to take action and invest in social programs that will help increase employment opportunities across the province.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment: Could the minister tell the House how pairing economic development and social impact will create economic and employment opportunities for Ontarians?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Our social enterprise action plan includes support for the recently announced Social Venture Exchange, or the SVX, which brings together impact investors, investors that also want to seek enterprises that are making a positive difference in society, with social enterprises looking for funding.

We've created an Office for Social Enterprise in my ministry, as well, to coordinate efforts across government and work with the sector, including promoting partnerships between the private sector, of course, and the not-for-profit sectors. It's due to the leadership in the sector itself that the great social enterprises Bullfrog Power, the Brick Works, Goodwill, TurnAround Couriers and others are thriving and contributing to our communities. Another good example is Rise Asset Development, which is a partnership between CAMH and the Rotman School of Management where they mentor individuals with mental health challenges to become self-sustaining entrepreneurs and business persons.

Social enterprise is well proven, and we have demonstrated our commitment as a province with this \$25-million investment.

## GOVERNMENT'S AGENDA

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Good morning, Speaker.

My question is for the Premier. Premier, it took 136 years for Ontario's debt to reach \$139 billion, but it took the Liberals only 10 years to double it to \$273 billion. Because of your uncontrolled spending, interest is now our third-largest expenditure, after health and after education, and that's with low interest rates. Because of your uncontrolled spending, you've turned the once mighty Ontario into a have-not province. All other provinces have recovered from the recession and are roaring ahead.

It's clear, Premier, that you have no plan, but we do. Will you work with us to implement our ideas, Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** A couple of things here: One, Ontarians should recognize and be proud of the fact that we are the only jurisdiction in North America to exceed job recovery like no other: 183% of jobs have come back to the province since the recession. We are the only government in Canada in over a decade to actually cut spending year over year, and as a result, our deficit targets have been reduced by over \$5.6 billion.

But we always know we need to do better. We will always aspire to do more. That's why we're going to continue investing in people, we're going to continue investing in infrastructure, and we're going to continue to support our businesses to make them even more competitive. That requires investments, and we're prepared to take on that debt for their benefit.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Premier, what we've seen from you so far is a lost decade for Ontario. Our debt has doubled, our hydro rates have doubled, we have high unemployment, and business is sitting on \$500 billion that they will not invest in Ontario. Instead of taking action, you've taken us further down the wrong path of the last 10 years.

The solutions to Ontario's problems aren't hard to figure out, Premier; they're just not easy to do. Ontario needs a government that has a plan to reduce spending and create jobs and has the courage of its convictions to stick to that plan.

Premier, we've put out a plan for discussion. We have 14 white papers, 200 pages—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Excuse me. The Minister of the Environment will come to order, along with the Attorney General, and that's the last time for the Minister of the Environment.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Our plan: We have 14 white papers and 200 pages of ideas. Premier, since you have no plan to turn Ontario around, will you please adopt ours?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** As noted, Ontario has exceeded its targets. Our deficit is going down; our spending has

been cut. We're doing all that's necessary to make Ontario—in fact, we are the largest jurisdiction in North America, second to none, in regard to investment in this province.

1110

The plan that the opposition has put forward is a plan of across-the-board cuts, something that would harm the sensitive recovery that we now have in Ontario. They want to drive down wages through harmful right-to-work legislation—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Chatham, come to order.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** They want to fire 10,000 education workers. They want to fire 2,000—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Just in case he didn't hear me while he was yelling, I asked the member from Chatham to come to order.

Continue.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** So, Mr. Speaker, part of their plan is about firing even more workers—2,000 health workers. They want to cancel something that is so critical to the well-being of our future, and that is investing in our children, investing in our youth, investing in our students and not cancelling the 30% reduction in tuition—that is about producing skills and making Ontario better.

## AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** My question is to the Premier. In 2010, this government slashed statutory accident benefit payouts by 50% across Ontario and 70% in the GTA. Yesterday, we finally received official confirmation that the insurance industry has pocketed every single penny of these savings, passing none of them on to Ontario drivers. In stunning testimony yesterday in committee, insurance actuary Bill Andrus presented hard evidence that the actual return on equity in the province of Ontario for the insurance industry was an incredible 25%. When are we going to see these billions in savings for insurance industries being passed on to Ontario drivers to result in a lower premium?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** As noted by the Auditor General's 2011 report, FSCO retained two experts to review the ROE benchmark and develop recommendations. We've adopted the widely accepted financial market principles to ensure the ROE benchmark reflects those market conditions. Using that methodology on an eight-year rolling average, the ROE benchmark for 2013 is, as noted, at 11%. But currently those benchmarks by auto insurance rate regulators in other similar Canadian provinces range up to 12%.

But notwithstanding that, we've taken the steps to reduce rates to ensure that we pass on the savings of those claim cost reductions to ensure that consumers benefit from further rate cuts, and that's what we're working towards.



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** The numbers speak for themselves. For three straight years, auto insurers have pocketed virtually every penny from the savings flowing from the 2010 benefit cutbacks: \$2 billion in savings each year for the insurance industry and nothing for Ontario's nine million drivers.

It comes as no surprise that the insurance industry, like EllisDon, is a large donor to this Liberal Party. When will the Premier start taking the side of Ontario drivers and not the well-connected auto insurance industry?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** As mentioned, FSCO is looking into a return on premium model, which would make the benchmark more transparent to Ontario drivers. Of course, we note—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Health will put that down. I've already ruled on that, and it's not going to happen anymore.

Please.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The benchmark, of course, is not a guarantee of the rate of return, but this is what is: We're taking strong action to bring them down. We've established an industry-wide average of 15% for the next two years—8% by August.

But this is important, Mr. Speaker. Here is a quote by one of the NDP members. It reads as follows: This "is a step in the right direction." "I'm pleased to say that something is finally being done." Sarah Campbell, NDP for Kenora–Rainy River. We agree with her as well.

## SENIORS

**Mr. Vic Dhillon:** My question is to the minister responsible for seniors. Seniors have made and continue to make outstanding contributions to our communities. In my riding of Brampton West, seniors are extremely active, and many are affiliated with organizations like the Canadian Association of Retired Persons. I'm delighted to say that, in May of this year, CARP Brampton chapter 52 held the largest inaugural chapter meeting the national CARP has ever had to date.

Today is the International Day of Older Persons. Can the minister outline some of the ways our government is supporting Ontario seniors?

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** I want to thank the member from Brampton West for this important question. Let me say that we recognize the fundamental role that seniors play and the remarkable contribution that seniors have made in shaping in our province.

It is an honour for me to serve as minister responsible for seniors, and let me say that the government is working very hard to make sure that seniors remain healthy, safe and independent for as long as possible. Our government has put one of many plans in place so our seniors, indeed, can continue to live healthy and independent.

The Action Plan for Seniors is a very comprehensive program supporting age-friendly communities, renewing Ontario's strategy to combat elder abuse and releasing a

new guide to programs and services for seniors in Ontario in 16 languages.

Let me say, Speaker, that we're always looking for new ways and new solutions for our seniors in Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Vic Dhillon:** Thank you, Minister, for that response. Minister, as you're aware, Ontario is home to 1.9 million people over the age of 65. That represents almost 15% of Ontario's population and 38% of Canada's seniors population. By 2036, the number of Ontarian seniors will more than double, to 4.2 million.

Minister, this demographic shift will present both new opportunities and challenges for the province of Ontario. Can the minister tell us more about the steps our government is taking to support seniors in Ontario?

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** Again, I want to thank the member from Brampton West because he's very well conversant with the challenges and opportunities of seniors in his particular area.

Let me say that in addition to the Ontario Action Plan for Seniors, for the first time in our history, we've regulated all retirement homes. In 2010, we passed the Retirement Homes Act.

Since 2003, we have invested more than \$8 million in elder abuse prevention and awareness initiatives. This includes \$900,000 a year in support of the Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse.

On top of that, we have put in place the Finding Your Way program, which is an awareness program for people—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Answer.

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** —with dementia. We also implemented the home renovation tax credit, worth up to \$1,500 annually.

It is my and the government's intention to make Ontario the best province for seniors.

## ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** My question is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Yesterday, Minister, 250 hairdressers from 37 First Choice Haircutters salons joined thousands of other tradespeople in Ontario trying to stop your government's trades tax. It is costing their industry jobs, and they simply cannot afford to pay for your new bureaucracy—provides them absolutely no benefit whatsoever. It's one more tax that the consumer has to absorb.

On top of that, now your trades tax enforcement cops are visiting—get this—hairdresser salons and barbers across the province. It's just a big joke, Mr. Speaker.

Will the minister finally stand up for the hard-working tradespeople and abolish the College of Trades once and for all?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You've left me with an opening again. I won't take it, so he knows.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Too easy.

The Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Mr. Speaker, I'll be happy to talk a little bit more about the situation with regard to barbers in the supplementary, but first I want to respond to the last request that member made.

This organization, when it comes to things like apprenticeship ratios, has performed extremely well, and I just want to share with the member a comparison to apprenticeship ratio reductions that have taken place. When they were in office: zero apprenticeship reductions. When the NDP were in office: one. Since we've been in office, as a government, before the College of Trades, we did eight reductions. The College of Trades has been in place for approximately six months: 14 reductions in ratios since they've been in office. That's a heck of a lot better than the record of your government, which I remind the Legislature was—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Well, what can you say, Speaker?

You don't even know the file on the ratio reviews. It's pathetic. You don't even know the file on it. When are you going to listen? The College of Trades is a boondoggle; it's that simple.

1120

Hairdressers across this province are being overtaxed and harassed by your government right today. First the HST, then the trades tax and now, of course, the trades cops out harassing them on the site. I've personally met with thousands of tradespeople across Ontario and heard their anger over this costly new boondoggle. How can the minister justify forcing hard-working tradespeople like these hairdressers to pick up the tab for the bureaucracy that offers no value to them, their business managers, their owners or the consumers? Minister, can you inform the House of even one—one benefit—the College of Trades is offering hairdressing salons or barbers in the province of Ontario?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Mr. Speaker, let's talk about the benefits that the College of Trades is bringing. The party opposite talks about reducing ratios for apprenticeships. Just look at the record of the College of Trades. I'm going to repeat it again: 14 apprenticeship ratio reductions in less than six months. Let's compare it to their record: eight years, zero reductions of apprenticeship ratios. Mr. Speaker, he asked for an example of something good coming from the College of Trades: 14 reductions in apprenticeship ratios, creating greater opportunities for apprentices. When we talk about creating jobs for youth, jobs for apprentices, dealing with

the skills gap in the skilled trades, they're working hard, they're doing it and their record's a heck of a lot better than yours was.

## WATER QUALITY

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. It seems to be déjà vu all over again for the people of Sarnia, Wallaceburg and downstream First Nations communities as well. For the second time in a month, people are worried about the safety of their drinking water in those communities. Last week, two new spills followed hard on the heels of a major diesel fuel leak into the St. Clair River in early September, which we asked questions about at that time. When will the Minister of the Environment put the health of Ontarians first by stopping corporate polluters before they spill instead of reacting after the fact?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** To the Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Mr. Speaker, you would recognize that we do that each and every day. First of all, we have in the province of Ontario some of the strictest laws that would exist anywhere in North America in terms of spills that are taking place in this area. We recognize, as well, that there is an opportunity to prosecute those who are seen to be in violation of those laws. So whenever a spill happens to take place, it is the responsibility of the Ministry of the Environment to do a full and complete investigation, if there is sufficient evidence to prosecute those who are responsible, if there's been a violation of the laws of the province of Ontario. The ministry has been involved in these matters for some time, has cracked down on this area, and will certainly continue to do so, particularly as a result of some of the recent incidents.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Under the Liberal watch, chemical spills in the Sarnia area have been a regular occurrence. This year alone there have been toxic spills by Sun-Canadian, Suncor, Imperial Oil, and Enbridge, to name just a few. Instead of wringing their hands after a spill has occurred, when will this government actually protect the drinking water of Ontarians and work with those affected communities to develop stronger regulations and more effective enforcement so we don't have to sail down these troubled waters again and again and again?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** In fact, I've been in discussion with the members in the particular area. The member from Sarnia, of course, has been very interested in this subject. The member for Chatham-Kent-Essex has been very much involved and has drawn these matters to my attention. Mr. McNaughton has been drawing these to my attention as well.

We do have, in the province of Ontario, very strong laws. If there is a violation of those laws, we are prepared to prosecute to the largest extent possible. It would be then, of course, up to the courts to make the judgments.



In the meantime, each of these establishments gets visited by the Ministry of the Environment to make a determination of whether they have in place the necessary equipment and procedures which would ensure—or at least limit the risk of any spills of this kind taking place in the future.

So I have met with the members in the area and we have discussed this matter thoroughly. You can be assured that the strongest of actions will be taken in each and every one of these cases.

### AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

**Ms. Mitzie Hunter:** It's my privilege to rise in the House today. My question is for the Minister of Agriculture and Food. Minister, as you know, Ontario is home to one of North America's largest food processing sectors. In fact, you often say that we have 3,000 businesses that employ more than 95,000 people across the province.

There are many people in my riding of Scarborough–Guildwood who work in the sector. This summer, I had the opportunity to tour some of the local food stores in Scarborough–Guildwood with the minister.

Given that this is a sector that provides economic benefits to all areas of the province, from farms right up the value chain for the food processing industry, I think all in this House would be interested in seeing the sector increase in size. With that in mind, can the minister tell this House what her government is doing to help Ontario's food processing sector to attract investment, grow and continue to thrive?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I want to thank the member for Scarborough–Guildwood for the question. I also want to thank the Toronto Region Board of Trade for the conference that they put together with Food and Consumer Products of Canada yesterday. There's work being done on creating a cluster of food processors and producers in this region.

The food industry is a very important contributor to the economy, as the member has said—overall, a \$34-billion contribution to the GDP and more than 700,000 jobs in this sector. So it's very important that we support that dynamic and innovative business.

At the round table yesterday, many of the top innovators in the sector talked to me about transportation, they talked about skills development, and they talked about the things that we can do, working together, to make sure that we do what's necessary to make this sector grow. I was very appreciative of their input.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Mitzie Hunter:** Thank you, Minister, for your response and for informing this House of the work that's under way. My constituents have told me that they really value knowing where their food comes from, and consumers here at home and around the world trust the quality and safety of Ontario food products.

I know that in my riding, our diverse population presents an opportunity for new and different food products that combine the need for convenience with the

comfort of one's cultural dishes. We also have an aging population looking for healthful foods; many reside in my riding of Scarborough–Guildwood. We have a growing trend of support for local food and people who read labels and want to know where their food is coming from.

What is your ministry doing to promote innovation in Ontario's agri-food sector?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I want to talk about a couple of initiatives. One is the partnership with the University of Guelph and the competitive research programs that are going on there. The other one is through the Growing Forward 2 program that was negotiated by my predecessor. He did a great job in working with the federal government and working with companies and the sector to make sure that we had in place the supports for innovation and expansion that are needed, and the kind of stability that's needed in the sector, because, as you know, the agri-food sector struggles with the vagaries of weather and those kinds of unpredictable changes that may happen.

One of the significant improvements to Growing Forward 2 this year is that food processing is now included. So it's not just the producers; it's also the processors. There were many processors at the table yesterday at the Toronto Region Board of Trade, and so we're working with them and Growing Forward 2 is supporting them in a very concrete way in their innovation, the acquisition of technology, and in supporting their businesses.

### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** My question is for the Minister of Finance. Minister, yesterday in committee, the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario, those people that represent us in our communities, obtaining the best rates possible for our homes, health and cars, implied that the idea of a 15% reduction in auto insurance is a pipe dream. Costs in the system are high and premiums just don't come down because you wish them to. They've seen no credible plan come out of your ministry, and without one, the reductions are an illusion. Even if the reductions do occur, the brokers say that no one outside the GTA will ever see those reductions.

I'm from St. Thomas. We have good drivers there and the city consistently has one of the lowest rates of accidents per insured vehicle in the province. Minister, why do you not think good drivers in my riding, in Collingwood, Timiskaming, Cochrane, Thunder Bay, Atikokan, Kenora or any other towns and cities outside of the GTA deserve any reduction?

1130

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I really appreciate the question. I'm not sure where the member has been for the last two years, because that's exactly what we've been doing. We've been working with the industry, finding ways to reduce those very issues and those costs. We've implemented, in our strategy, safe driver protection so that those who are safe drivers, who do have good records, get better benefits.

It's working, because, as I've mentioned in the past, we have press releases from various insurance providers who have already started to reduce rates. You've already admitted that they already have reduced costs, so that's a good thing for those communities.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** I'm not sure, Mr. Speaker, if I did actually say they'd reduced costs, but I'm saying you promised a 15% reduction in auto insurance when in fact you cannot deliver that outside of the GTA.

It's not surprising, though, that you took this idea from the NDP, who a few months ago introduced a bill that would lower premiums for drunk drivers across this province.

The PC Party has a plan, and I wish the minister would implement it. We've told you for months now to reduce the red tape and bureaucracy in the system, reform the dispute resolution process, and actually take that anti-fraud task force report that's sitting on the desk beside Drummond's and implement it and ensure that we have increased insurer accountability. As our leader, Tim Hudak, said yesterday, we have the ideas. You're welcome to steal any one you want.

The experts agreed in the committee that your 15% pledge is unattainable. It's disrespectful, Mr. Speaker, for the minister to tell the Ontario people to stand by his pledge of—an empty promise. Will you stop playing the shell games and admit you have no plan to achieve savings for all Ontarians—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister of Finance?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** What's really rich is that johnny-come-lately all of a sudden is talking about reducing rates.

We have already instituted rate reductions, in 2004. We've taken the anti-fraud task force recommendations, and we have been implementing them. We have releases from CAA and the Co-operators advancing the reductions in costs, and we've taken the steps necessary to reduce them over the last two years.

The member opposite is talking about the very issues, like dispute resolution, that we've already started to implement. Thank you for your recommendations; you're two years too late.

## TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Minister, when last we spoke, at the plowing match a couple of weeks ago, you promised an update on the girder situation on the parkway. Yesterday, that briefing was to take place, but it was cancelled abruptly.

You've been looking into whether or not those girders have to be replaced. Can you update the House this morning on the latest information you have at your disposal, sir?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I want to thank the member for his very sincere concern about this, his watchfulness on this particular file and his collaboration. I'm very committed to continuing to work with him and ensuring he gets a full briefing.

It was just 24 hours ago that we received the report of the independent expert review panel. The deputy minister has received it. I have just become aware of some of the contents and details of it. It is now under the active review of the ministry lawyers and engineers. The chief engineer has had a day with it. It is his responsibility to make recommendations to the ministry and the government. I have said to the opposition members that I will ensure they have a full briefing prior to its release, and we are committed to doing that.

Again, this is a very serious matter—the safety and durability of our structures—which this government takes very critically. I look forward to working with the member, and I'm quite happy to take any meeting or time with him to ensure he's fully briefed and has all the information.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Perhaps I should have posed the question of Dave Battagello of the Windsor Star. He's running with a story today that says the girders are coming out. If the Windsor Star knows about it, why doesn't the minister know about it? And when are the people in Windsor—Tecumseh and LaSalle going to get some information from this government?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** When a minister of the crown becomes aware that there may be a serious safety issue, he doesn't run to the journalists; he goes to the deputy minister and has a thorough review, which is exactly what I did in May.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, based on the concerns that I had, I asked the deputy minister to investigate and review. Deputy Layton did that and did a very good job and came back, and we both agreed there was a need for an independent review, which I struck in June. That review worked very promptly over the last 60 days and tabled its report. This is a review of five of the country's most respected structural engineers and a gentleman with 40 years of legal experience.

This is a very serious matter. It is a safety issue. It is an issue of great concern. We will advance that report. I would like the member to have—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question?

## SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Ontario recently renewed its commitment to reduce poverty with the launch of province-wide consultations to hear how the government and our communities can continue to work together to break the cycle of poverty.

Just yesterday evening, I held a local consultation in my riding of York South—Weston. One of the many suggestions that came forward was that one of the gov-



ernment initiatives that is working the best is the Student Nutrition Program. A child's ability to learn increases tremendously when you have access to a nutritious diet.

My question to the minister is: Is our government committed to doing its best to expand and give our children the best opportunity to have a good environment to learn—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Minister of Children and Youth Services.

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** I'd like to thank the member both for undertaking the consultation in her community last night with respect to poverty reduction consultation and for her question about the Student Nutrition Program.

I'll say that this morning myself and the Minister of Health had a good start to the morning. We were at Church Street public school, spending some time with the grade 6 leaders there and talking about our commitment to providing children across the province with the best learning environment. One of the best ways we know to enhance that is to provide students with a nutritious diet.

This morning, I'm pleased to say that we announced we are expanding our government Student Nutrition Program. We will be investing—

*Applause.*

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** We've heard the same thing about the importance of this program.

We will be investing an additional \$3 million to provide students—this will create 200 new programs for 30,000 more children across the province.

Evidence shows that these programs lead to better concentration and getting more out of the school day. I'm very proud of our record.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1138 to 1500.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to welcome some very special guests to the chamber this afternoon. The consul of the People's Republic of China and guests are here today: Consul Yang Shaojun, Shi Xiaoguang and Wang Jian. Welcome to the Ontario Legislature.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We welcome our guests.

The member from Dufferin—Caledon.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** She was here before you.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Okay.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Thank you, Speaker. It's my pleasure to welcome my friend Sheena Weir from the law society.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Now the member from Durham.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I've been trumped.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### CHILD PROTECTION

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Speaker, before I begin, would it be okay if I asked for unanimous consent to wear a purple ribbon in support of Child Abuse Prevention Month?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Barrie has asked for unanimous consent to wear the purple ribbon. Do we agree? Agreed.

Restart the clock, please.

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Thank you, Speaker. Today, October 1, marks the beginning of Child Abuse Prevention Month. Children represent the future of our province, and so I'm honoured to stand and speak to the importance of this month, which aims to raise awareness of the signs of child abuse and neglect; that child safety and family well-being begin in the community and that everyone has a duty to report abuse and neglect.

The safety and well-being of Ontario's children should be one of our first priorities, certainly. So I was proud to introduce my children's-right-to-care bill, Bill 88, which aims to protect children in care and recently passed second reading. This protects children who are 16 and 17 years old who might find themselves in the situation where they've lost their family or have been abused by their guardians.

Purple is the colour of child abuse prevention, so today I will be wearing a purple ribbon in support of ending all forms of child abuse, and I urge all my colleagues to do the same.

We all have a responsibility to ensure that Ontario's children can grow up in the safest environment possible. That's the duty of all of us, not only as parents and legislators but certainly as members of our communities: to make sure that we care for each other and each other's children whenever we see signs of abuse and neglect and stand up and take notice and appropriate action.

If you think a child needs help, please don't stand by. Call the children's aid society immediately. Together, we can make Ontario the best place to grow up, for all of us and all of our children.

### EQUINOX SUMMIT: LEARNING 2030

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It was my pleasure this Sunday to attend the Equinox Summit: Learning 2030 in Waterloo. This unique event was hosted by Waterloo's Global Science Initiative, the Perimeter Institute, and the University of Waterloo, with the important support of TVO as a media partner.

The goals of the summit are summed up best by PI's Neil Turok's and the University of Waterloo's President Feridun Hamdullahpur's editorial in the *Globe and Mail* yesterday: "We need to create better schools if we want today's infants to grow into capable citizens, able to navigate future challenges and contribute positively to their communities." And because "134 million babies were born worldwide in the past year," we need to plan

for their high school experience in 2030. We need this plan to be inclusive and we need to start now.

Now, what is happening at this summit is truly amazing. A diverse group of thinkers of all ages are working on some of the fundamental questions that have emerged in today's world of education, including: What is the purpose of education? What are our hopes and aspirations for a strong public education system? How can we challenge and innovate within the system as it is currently constructed? Where are the First Nation, Métis and Inuit voices in education, and how can we establish more trusting and respectful relationships? If you have a connection with education, then you will understand that there is some urgency to these questions.

I would encourage every party to pay close attention to the work that emerges from the Learning 2030 summit, because if we get education right, everything else—justice, the economy, the environment and our health—will also fall into place.

#### PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

**Ms. Soo Wong:** Today I'm honoured to extend greetings to all Chinese Canadians on the 64th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, a milestone event which took place on October 1, 1949. Chinese National Day is a time when all Canadians can reflect on the tremendous contributions Chinese Canadians have made in Ontario and across this great country.

From the first railway workers in the 1800s to professionals from every field—scientists, engineers, journalists, restaurateurs, artists and many more—Chinese Canadians have overwhelmingly contributed to the cultural tapestry of this great province of Ontario and Canada.

Today, in recognition of this occasion, we raised the Chinese national flag on the south lawn of the Legislature in the presence of Consul General Fang Li and Mrs. Fang Li, several members of the Legislature, and many distinguished Chinese Canadians and community leaders.

Ontarians are proud to embrace and celebrate our collective diversity through histories, traditions, languages and beliefs. As a province, we draw strength from this vibrant and rich mosaic.

On behalf of our government and the residents of my riding of Scarborough—Agincourt, I would like to extend my best wishes as Chinese in Ontario celebrate this historic occasion.

#### PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

**Mr. John O'Toole:** This may be repetitive with respect to our guests in the visitors' chamber today. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remind this House that October 1 is the National Day of the People's Republic of China. Dignitaries attended the flag-raising at noon today, and we were fortunate to have Consul General Fang Li, as well as the other speakers and dignitaries, Liberal Minister Michael Chan, as well as PC MPP Todd Smith and NDP MPP Rosario Marchese, all of whom addressed

many people, including young students who were in attendance.

The People's Republic of China was founded on October 1, 1949, in Tiananmen Square.

Mr. Speaker, China is Ontario and Canada's second-largest trading partner in the world. In 2011, two-way trade between Ontario and China totalled \$29 billion. Perhaps soon to be the largest economy of the world—almost 1.5 billion people—it's a country to keep an eye on.

Certainly, in my riding of Durham last Friday, Mayor Adrian Foster, Clarington council and the Clarington Board of Trade had the privilege of hosting Fang Li, consul general for the republic, in a visit to local farms and local industry. Durham region itself is currently taking part in a trade mission to China led by Regional Chair Roger Anderson.

I'm confident there is much to be achieved as a diverse and prosperous Ontario continues working together with our friends from China on initiatives of culture and economic opportunity.

Welcome to this Legislature. Welcome to Ontario. Welcome to Canada. It's a pleasure to have friends like that around the world.

#### TAREK LOUBANI AND JOHN GREYSON

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Today I rise in the House to bring awareness of the plight of two Ontario residents who are at great risk in Egypt. Tarek Loubani, an emergency room doctor from London, Ontario, and John Greyson, an award-winning film director and professor from York University, have been imprisoned in Egypt for 45 days with no due process.

In mid-August 2003, Professor Greyson and Dr. Loubani found themselves caught up in some of the country's most violent demonstrations since the Arab Spring of 2012. After being arbitrarily detained and arrested by Egyptian authorities, Dr. Loubani and Professor Greyson's nightmare began. Disturbing reports have come to light of violent interrogation tactics, humiliation, as well as physical and mental abuse at the hands of Egyptian authorities.

#### 1510

Now these two Canadians face charges of intent to kill, which stands as a capital offence in Egypt.

Hundreds of thousands of supporters have raised their concern and outrage. The federal government has called for their release, but we must do more.

I call on all Canadians to continue to raise awareness and support for Professor Greyson and Dr. Loubani. More importantly, I call on the Prime Minister to engage with his direct counterparts in Egypt to resolve this situation. This situation will not be resolved without continued pressure from the highest levels of the Canadian government.

Let us assure all Canadians that as a government and as a society, we will stand together to secure the freedom of any Canadian who has been unlawfully imprisoned



and whose human rights have been violated at home or abroad.

### YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

**Ms. Mitzie Hunter:** In August, I had the privilege of hosting a youth jobs round table in my riding of Scarborough–Guildwood. I was joined by the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, as well as several local Scarborough–Guildwood non-profit leaders and front-line workers. It was a great opportunity for us to come together and discuss the future of Scarborough's and Ontario's youth.

This government's investment of \$295 million over the next two years is much needed. Ontario's youth unemployment rate is currently the highest in eastern Canada.

Scarborough–Guildwood is full of young families worried about the future of their children. Youth employment is consistently one of the most talked-about issues in my riding. I've already had a number of recent graduates visit my constituency office to talk about the lack of employment opportunities for youth. Youth living in my priority neighbourhoods need our support.

I am proud to work with a Premier and alongside a government that is listening to these concerns. The youth jobs strategy will help young people in Scarborough–Guildwood realize their full potential. The strategy encourages entrepreneurship and includes incentives for employers.

This government is having conversations, much like the one in my riding last month, all over Ontario. We are committed to listening to every Ontarian to make this province a more fair and prosperous place. A brighter future for our youth will also result in a stronger economy here in Ontario. There is much work to be done on this issue.

I know my constituents in Scarborough–Guildwood are welcoming this investment in our young people and their future.

### WINGHAM BALL YOUTH COMMITTEE

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I stand today to salute a group of young men who lead by example and who have proven to be a source of pride and inspiration in their community. They are known as the Wingham Ball Youth Committee, but I have to tell you that based on their vision, their commitment to encouraging young people to play ball and their business plan to attract local sponsorship, they also have become known as leaders in the community.

Dawson Currie, Les Irvine, Mitchell Newson and Brad and Jeff Pewtress range in age from 12 to 15, but clearly, age does not matter when a group of individuals, committed to a vision and task, work together and inspire a community.

The Wingham Ball Youth Committee's project scope focused on the need for better fencing, a safer field and a pitching machine. Numerous local community groups,

the Wingham Hitmen and Libro Financial Group saw merit in this collective initiative and jumped on side to help the youth committee realize their dream.

The Township of North Huron Recreation Department worked along with the young men on all aspects of the project, including design, procurement, management and implementation.

All of the committee's hard work culminated in a great day this past Saturday—I can still hit the ball into centre field; just a little footnote there—when the community came out to Riverside Park to tip their hats to the young men and see first-hand how a vision with a proper plan and support can indeed become a reality.

Congratulations, Dawson, Les, Mitchell, Brad and Jeff. You hit this project right out of the park. Please don't stop leading by example. I look forward to seeing what you choose to do next.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I suspect you would hit it out of the park.

Members' statements.

### BREAST CANCER

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** Mr. Speaker, we are joined today by visitors from Rethink Breast Cancer, kicking off Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Welcome. They have been working hard to pioneer cutting-edge breast cancer education, advocacy and support that speaks fearlessly to the needs of young women.

When a young woman gets breast cancer, it often spreads more aggressively, leading to tougher treatment and a harder fight to survive. A young woman who is diagnosed with breast cancer also faces concerns that are somewhat different than those of older women, including diagnosis during pregnancy, effects of chemotherapy on fertility, and risk of the menopausal symptoms of osteoporosis.

Our government brought in the scope of the Ontario Breast Screening Program in 2011 so that high-risk women are screened earlier: starting at age 30. This means 90,000 additional scans over three years.

We know that there is more work to be done. That's why the work that Rethink Breast Cancer does is so vital.

I hope all the members are able to attend the reception this evening in the legislative dining room and support the important efforts of this dynamic group.

### CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN DUFFERIN–CALEDON

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I'm pleased to rise today to recognize a special 20th-anniversary celebration for three organizations in the Headwaters region. The Dufferin County Museum, Theatre Orangeville and In the Hills magazine all began 20 years ago.

Under the attentive eyes of curator Wayne Townsend and archivist Steve Brown, the Dufferin County Museum and Archives showcases our community's heritage and culture through its artifacts, collections and records. The museum is a hive of activities in all seasons, with events

that educate and entertain by sharing the fascinating collections and stories from Dufferin. In fact, they are highlighted in Queen's Park this week.

Theatre Orangeville has entertained thousands since it opened its doors. With artistic director David Nairn at the helm, the Theatre Orangeville stage has launched the careers of talented professional actors. Many original Canadian works have premiered on the stage at Orangeville and have gone on to achieve national and international success. I am particularly impressed with Theatre Orangeville's dedication to the development of its youth programs and its partnership with Community Living Dufferin.

Publisher and editor Signe Ball of In the Hills magazine has been sharing our community's unique stories for two decades. In the Hills captures the beauty of our community and celebrates our past, present and future. With an award-winning magazine, Signe Ball and the talented writers and photographers are documenting the tales of the Headwaters region.

I congratulate these three organizations on their 20th anniversary.

#### REPORT, INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that I have today laid upon the table a report from the Integrity Commissioner responding to the request of the member from Ottawa—Orléans concerning the member from Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock.

#### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received a report on intended appointments dated October 1, 2013, of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies.

Pursuant to standing order 108(f)(9), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

*Report deemed adopted.*

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### RED TAPE AND REGULATORY REVIEW ACT, 2013

##### LOI DE 2013 SUR LA RÉVISION DES FORMALITÉS ADMINISTRATIVES ET DES DISPOSITIONS RÉGLEMENTAIRES

Mr. Hillier moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 110, An Act to establish political oversight over legislation and regulations to reduce red tape and unjustified regulatory burdens / Projet de loi 110, Loi établissant un régime de surveillance politique des lois et règlements afin de réduire les formalités administratives et les fardeaux réglementaires injustifiés.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** This bill establishes a standing committee of the Legislative Assembly, to be known as the Standing Committee on Red Tape and Regulatory Review. Every public bill must be referred to the committee for a review or include a provision stating that it applies despite the requirement for a review. The review deals with whether the bill imposes a regulatory burden on persons or bodies other than the public sector, whether the bill infringes on the freedom of those persons or bodies to own and use property, whether the regulatory burden constitutes an unjustified burden and red tape, and whether the person or body that administers the bill is best suited to do so. The committee may amend the bill before reporting it back to the assembly.

1520

No person or body, including the Lieutenant Governor in Council, is allowed to make a regulation under an act without giving the committee at least 60 days' notice to review the regulation and to propose amendments to it, except if the person or body gives notice to the committee that the urgency of the situation requires the making of an emergency regulation. An emergency regulation can remain in force for no longer than 90 days.

The committee can also review acts after they have been enacted and regulations after they have been made and make a report to the assembly.

##### MODERNIZING REGULATION OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION ACT, 2013

##### LOI DE 2013 SUR LA MODERNISATION DE LA RÉGLEMENTATION DE LA PROFESSION JURIDIQUE

Mr. Gerretsen moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 111, An Act to amend the Law Society Act and the Solicitors Act / Projet de loi 111, Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Barreau et la Loi sur les procureurs.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I'll wait until ministerial statements, Speaker.

##### PUBLIC SAFETY RELATED TO DOGS STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2013

##### LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI A TRAIT À LA SÉCURITÉ PUBLIQUE LIÉE AUX CHIENS

Mr. Hillier moved first reading of the following bill:



Bill 112, An Act to amend the Animals for Research Act and the Dog Owners' Liability Act with respect to pit bulls / Projet de loi 112, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les animaux destinés à la recherche et la Loi sur la responsabilité des propriétaires de chiens en ce qui a trait aux pit-bulls.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Speaker, this bill repeals provisions in the Animals for Research Act relating to the disposition of pit bulls under that act. This bill also repeals provisions in the Dog Owners' Liability Act that prohibit restricted pit bulls and provide for controls on pit bulls.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### LEGAL PROFESSION

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Before making my statement, may I introduce, in the gallery: Cathy Corsetti, chair of the paralegal standing committee at the law society; David Wright, chair of the law society tribunal; André Brazeau, government and stakeholder relations adviser; Sheena Weir—introduced earlier—director of public affairs for the Law Society of Upper Canada; as well as Julia Bass, policy counsel with the Law Society of Upper Canada. Joining them in the House is Christine Shaver, a policy adviser in my own ministry, and Liz McLennan, my legislative assistant.

*Applause.*

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Anybody who works in a political job here deserves applause. We all know that.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to introduce legislation that would, if passed, help to modernize the regulation of the legal profession in Ontario.

The Law Society of Upper Canada regulates lawyers and paralegals in our province. The law society does excellent work to ensure that Ontarians who engage legal professionals receive competent and high-quality services.

The law society has requested the amendments contained in this bill, which were passed by its governing body, which is commonly called Convocation. We agree that these are both desirable and in the public interest.

As I mentioned before, today we have with us the chair of the law society's paralegal standing committee, Cathy Corsetti. It is in no small part through her outstanding leadership that significant progress has been made in advancing the status of the new paralegal profession. I look forward to continuing to work with you, Cathy, and the treasurer of the law society on these very important recommendations.

You may be interested, Speaker, that there are over 5,000 paralegals registered with the Law Society of Upper Canada here in Ontario today.

In short, the proposed bill before us today includes changes that would do the following: first of all, strengthen the hearing and appeals process governing lawyers and paralegals in Ontario; and increase the number of paralegals at Convocation to better recognize the importance of this maturing profession.

Mr. Speaker, our proposed legislation would reform the law society's hearing and appeals process, which governs allegations of professional misconduct brought against lawyers and paralegals. It would do this by establishing a new internal tribunal that would oversee the law society's current hearing and appeals panels.

To ensure that this tribunal would be both independent and effective, a full-time lawyer would act as its chair. The chair would be someone who is not currently one of the law society's directors or, as they're more commonly known, benchers. So it would be a non-bencher.

How the law society treats cases of potential misconduct is a matter of vital concern to the public, to its members and to all who have dealings with our legal system on a day-to-day basis. This step would provide for better coordination and consistency of the two panels and ensure greater transparency and accountability to the public.

The proposed amendments would also allow for a more cost-effective and timely process for recovering legal costs from lawyers and paralegals. It would achieve this by authorizing the law society to suspend a professional's licence for failure to pay legal costs relating to a discipline proceeding that has been awarded against that individual.

A third proposal would clarify that the law society can receive information that is solicitor-client privileged from any person in a hearing, including a client. Solicitor-client privilege is a person's right to refuse to disclose communications made to or received from his or her legal adviser. While the current legislation says that the law society can use information received from a lawyer or a paralegal in a hearing and that such information remains protected, it is silent about information received from others at such a hearing, such as, for example, the clients that may have been involved in that particular subject matter.

Ontario is the only jurisdiction in Canada to regulate paralegals, which gives consumers more choice, more protection and access to justice when obtaining legal services. This has been a highly successful initiative, with almost 5,000 paralegals now licensed and insured in this province since 2006.

The fourth legislative proposal would increase the number of paralegals on the law society's governing body from two to five. This change would provide for a more equitable representation and recognize the more mature status, as well, of the paralegal profession, as it has developed over the last eight or nine years. The proposal to increase the number of paralegals on

Convocation, the governing body, is time-sensitive, as it needs to be in place by December 31 of this year in preparation for the next four-year election cycle, which commences in March 2014.

The fifth legislative proposal will provide a house-keeping amendment specifying that paralegals may receive payment for representing an individual in a legal proceeding, to reflect the current practice.

1530

All of the changes contained in this proposed legislation would help to further modernize the regulation of the legal profession in Ontario. As a result, there would be more efficient, effective, accountable and accessible services, both for the public and for the professionals regulated by the Law Society of Upper Canada.

I once again want to thank the treasurer of the Law Society of Upper Canada and Convocation for exemplary leadership in helping to ensure that the fine reputation of Ontario's legal professionals remains second to none. I also once again want to thank and congratulate Cathy Corsetti for championing the development of her profession—the paralegal profession—here in Ontario.

I urge my fellow members to support this legislation and have it passed and enacted before December 31 of this year.

#### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I rise in the Legislature today to recognize October 1 as the 34th anniversary of the proclamation of Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act in 1979. This single piece of legislation changed the way workplaces manage health and safety. The act extended three key rights to the vast majority of Ontario workers: the right to know about workplace hazards, the right to participate in matters affecting their health and safety, and the right to refuse unsafe work. Everybody became accountable for workplace health and safety.

On this occasion, it is important to recognize and reaffirm that in all workplaces across Ontario, people are our greatest asset. They must be properly trained, and we must strengthen our efforts to protect workers and their families. We must do whatever it takes to prevent workplace fatalities, injuries and illnesses—and to support their families and loved ones. We are making progress in our quest to make workplaces safer, working together with everyone who shares this goal.

Workplace injuries have been decreasing: on construction sites, in businesses, hospitals and schools. Health and safety advocates are making workplaces safer. Since 2003, we have significantly lowered the rate of workplace injury in this province. The number of injuries in Ontario has gone down 30%. Ontario is now one of the safest places to work in Canada, but we must do more.

Our government has taken significant steps to reduce and eliminate workplace injuries. We have increased the number of enforcement officers to make sure employers follow the rules. We had Tony Dean conduct a thorough health and safety review and provide recommendations,

which received all-party support in this House, to take a strong, proactive approach to workplace health and safety. We have brought enforcement and prevention together under the purview of the province's first-ever chief prevention officer, Mr. George Gritziotis, to help make sure that injuries do not happen in the first place. And we will soon launch the first-ever province-wide occupational health and safety strategy, developed with advice from labour, employers, injured workers and community groups, to establish clear priorities and rules that will guide our work in the years ahead. This includes mandatory safety awareness training for workers and supervisors, which we will be introducing shortly.

Together, as a society, all of us must work to build a strong safety culture, a culture of prevention in our province's workplaces. Together we can prevent workplace deaths and injuries. As the Minister of Labour, I am committed to ensuring that this goal becomes a reality for everyone.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It's now time for responses.

#### LEGAL PROFESSION

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** It's a pleasure to be able to respond today to Modernizing Regulation of the Legal Profession Act. I think that that embodies the essence of the bill that we are looking at, because I recall, several years ago, when there was a great deal of discussion between the paralegal community and the lawyers' community in terms of coming together and finding opportunities to be able to work together. It was at that time that the law society took the, if you like, stewardship of the paralegal community. So when I look at what we have here today, it seems to me that this is in keeping with the continual need to modernize and make their services available to the public as a whole.

One of the most important things, as legislators, that we must look at is assessment in terms of how this is going to affect the public. I think, when you look at this piece of legislation, which, of course, comes as a result of the paralegal standing committee, we're looking at the essence of bringing forward modernization methods that will continue to provide the public with a fair and balanced approach, which will then make sure that it meets those demands of accessibility, that people will be able to look at which avenue would suit them best.

I think that much of the debate that will follow on this bill will centre around the importance that this has for the citizen, for the consumer, and, quite frankly, that will be what serves them to allow us to look at this bill as it makes its way through the legislative process.

#### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** It's a pleasure to rise today in recognition of the 34th anniversary of the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Created first in 1979, under the government of PC Premier William Davis, this act serves



as a legal framework and as an important tool to determine the duties and rights for all of those in the workplace.

With other pieces of contributing legislation, such as the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act and the Human Rights Code, employers, workers and partners in occupational health and safety all contribute to highlighting ways to prevent injury and illness in the workplace. All partners have key roles to play in taking responsibility and contributing to the success of this initiative.

Of course, the main purpose of the act is to protect workers from health and safety hazards on the job.

The act sets out duties for all workplace parties and rights for workers. It establishes procedures for dealing with workplace hazards and provides for enforcement of the law.

Speaker, after 34 years of this important act, Ontario has lessened the burden on the health care system by reducing the number of workplace injuries and illnesses, avoided costs for employers and provided a level playing field for compliant companies.

Myself, Tim Hudak—our leader—and the entire PC caucus are proud to stand with our commitment for a sustainable workplace health and safety culture that will continually focus on educating to preventing workplace injuries and illnesses. With this, we can make Ontario the healthiest and safest province to work in.

#### LEGAL PROFESSION

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to add my voice to the debate. Particularly, I'd like to congratulate the law society for their great work. I think they all deserve recognition for their commitment to doing something which is very important in our province.

The interests of the public, particularly in our society, are that there needs to be access to justice. That's a principle. Particularly where we have a society based on the rule of law, we need to ensure that the quality of legal representation is maintained, and the law society does great work in ensuring that we have a qualified and competent bar.

In terms of the access to justice, the reality is that there are many key areas where we need the use and the skills of paralegals. The leadership that the law society has demonstrated by taking on a role in introducing that principle of allowing that access to be regulated, to be of the highest quality, is a testament to their forward thinking, and it's in support of that notion that we truly need to have access to justice in our society to make it an equitable society, so I really commend them on that. I think they deserve a round of applause for that great work.

1540

I think that the stronger our checks and balances are with respect to any profession, the higher quality the profession will be. It's important that we maintain the highest quality, particularly where it's such an important right. Our ability to navigate in this society depends

strongly upon our ability to access the services we need so that we can engage in this society, and that's why our legal representation and our legal checks and balances are so important.

Again, I commend the committee members, the Convocation, the treasurer, all the members who took the time and the effort to make sure that this legislation was brought forward. Thank you for finally bringing it forward and making sure that we have the highest quality here in Ontario.

#### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY SANTÉ ET SÉCURITÉ AU TRAVAIL

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** It's my pleasure to rise today, on behalf of the Ontario New Democratic Party, to recognize the 34th anniversary of the proclamation of the Occupational Health and Safety Act in Ontario.

En français, le 1<sup>er</sup> octobre marque le 34<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de la promulgation, en 1979, de la Loi sur la santé et la sécurité au travail.

This is a bill that came into law two years after I was born, so I have been a benefactor of the Occupational Health and Safety Act with each and every job that I have ever worked at. That has meant that I'm here today, safe and sound, and so are thousands of other workers in the province of Ontario who rely on that act to protect them each and every day at work. It's an act that is a living, breathing document, and one that is vital to the security and safety and efficiency of our workplaces in this province, and one that should be continuously evolving.

As always, I sense that my colleague the Minister of Labour has a deep understanding and a deep desire to continue to work with workers in this province to ensure that our occupational health and safety code is up to standards and does cover the evolving nature of our workplaces.

However—I knew you were waiting for that, Minister—the minister states that since 2003, there has been a 30% reduction in injuries. That may be so, but in the last couple of years, workplace deaths and fatalities in the province of Ontario have risen, and that is very unfortunate. One of these cases, unfortunately, happened in the province of Ontario, at the Stobie Mine, where two young workers were killed. No charges were laid.

We know that Vale Inco was charged the largest-ever financial penalty in the province, but that does not go far enough, because if one of your family members or friends were killed on the job due to the negligence of a company, there's no monetary compensation that could ever make that right.

I call on the minister, as I always do, to work with me and colleagues in the House to ensure that we are doing absolutely everything we can. That means evolving and refining and reforming the compensation system, which has massive pitfalls.

Again—and I've said this before—if my colleagues, as members in this House, aren't getting calls at their

constituency offices about the broken nature of our compensation system, then they aren't answering the phone.

I do wish to mark this anniversary. I am appreciative of the Occupational Health and Safety Act. It means that we are a safer, more progressive, more efficient and proactive province. It's one that I fully support and endorse, as well as my colleagues in the Ontario New Democratic caucus.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

## PETITIONS

### WATER QUALITY

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I have an extremely competing interest for petitions. I have to go to the member from Durham to show a little love.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I respect your decision as well.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You'd better.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** "Whereas under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario regulation 319/08, public health inspectors are required to undertake risk assessments of small drinking water systems;

"Whereas many of these small drinking water systems are located in homes operating bed and breakfasts in rural Ontario;

"Whereas private homes that are the sites of bed and breakfasts already have potable drinking water used by the homeowners and their families every day;

"Whereas many of these bed and breakfasts have established the quality of their drinking water through years of regular testing;

"Whereas these home-based businesses are facing high costs" and taxes "to comply with the new requirements of regulation 319/08;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Minister of Health amend Ontario regulation 319/08 to give the testing track record of a small drinking water system greater weight in the risk assessment process. Furthermore we, the undersigned, ask that bed and breakfasts operated within a private home with a drinking water supply meeting all the requirements of a private home not be subject to regulation 319/08."

I'm pleased to sign and support it and give it to Gabrielle, one of the pages, on the last—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Petitions? The member from Kenora—Rainy River.

### TAXATION

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the cost of living in northwestern Ontario is significantly higher than other regions of the province

due to the high cost of necessities such as hydro, home heating fuel, gasoline and auto insurance; and

"Whereas an increase in the price of any of these essential goods will make it even more difficult for people living in northwestern Ontario to pay their bills and put food on the table;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To reject any proposed increase to the harmonized sales tax, gas tax or any other fees or taxes in the north-west; and instead investigate other means such as increasing corporate tax compliance or eliminating corporate tax loopholes in order to fund transit in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area."

I support this wholeheartedly, will affix my signature, and give it to page Ravicha to deliver to the table.

### LYME DISEASE

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads:

"Whereas the tick-borne illness known as chronic Lyme disease, which mimics many catastrophic illnesses such as multiple sclerosis, Crohn's, Alzheimer's ... is increasingly endemic in Canada, but scientifically validated diagnostic tests and treatment choices are currently not available in Ontario, forcing patients to seek these in the USA and Europe; and

"Whereas the Canadian Medical Association informed the public, governments and the medical profession in the May 30, 2000, edition of their professional journal that Lyme disease is endemic throughout Canada, particularly in southern Ontario; and

"Whereas the Ontario public health system and the Ontario health insurance plan currently do not fund those specific tests that accurately serve the process of establishing a clinical diagnosis, but only recognize testing procedures known in the medical literature to provide false negatives at 45% to 95% of the time;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to request the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to direct that the Ontario public health system and OHIP include all currently available and scientifically verified tests for acute and chronic Lyme diagnosis in Ontario and to have everything necessary to create public awareness of Lyme disease in Ontario, and to have internationally developed diagnostic and successful treatment protocols available to patients and physicians."

I agree with this petition. It's been signed by over 2,000 people. I will sign it and provide it to page Jasper.

### AIR-RAIL LINK

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas diesel trains are a health hazard for people who live near them;



"Whereas more toxic fumes will be created by the 400 daily trains than the car trips they are meant to replace;

"Whereas the planned air-rail link does not serve the communities through which it passes and will be priced beyond the reach of most commuters;

"Whereas all major cities in the world with train service between their downtown core and the airport use electric trains;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the province of Ontario stop building the air-rail link for diesel and move to electrify the route immediately;

"That the air-rail link be designed, operated and priced as an affordable transportation option between all points along its route."

I couldn't agree more. I'm going to sign it and have it delivered to the table by Bridget.

#### PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ministry of Health has eliminated non-hospital physiotherapy service from the Health Insurance Act; and

"Whereas this will drastically reduce the number of allowable treatments to 12 per year for people who are currently eligible for 100 treatments annually; and"—

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Not true.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** You've got to listen.

"Whereas under the changes, the cost of visits under the CCAC (community care access centre) model will rise to \$120 per visit, rather than the current fee of \$12.20 per visit through OHIP physiotherapy providers; and

"Whereas funding for physiotherapy services to seniors in long-term-care homes would be cut by almost 50%, from an estimated \$110 million per year to \$58.5 million per year;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Ministry of Health as follows:

"That the province guarantee there will be no reduction in services currently available for those who are eligible for OHIP-funded physiotherapy."

I'm happy to defend my seniors and to give this to page Megan.

1550

#### INCONTINENCE PRODUCTS

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care does not fund incontinence products for seniors;

"Whereas adequate funding for incontinence products for incontinent seniors would result in greater independence, make nutrition and housing more affordable;

"Whereas adequate funding for incontinence products for incontinent seniors would save valuable health care dollars by reducing the risk of skin breakdown, bladder infection, and sepsis;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Immediately provide adequate funding for incontinence products for seniors."

There are 1,142 seniors. I support this petition and will sign my name.

#### HOME WARRANTY PROGRAM

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I have a petition here on behalf of residents of Prince Edward-Hastings.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas new homeowners and home builders across Ontario have expressed significant dissatisfaction with the Taron Warranty Corp.; and

"Whereas this government monopoly needs to be held accountable for the repeated failing reported by both new homebuyers and home builders they were created to benefit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Minister of Consumer Services as follows:

"That the minister request the Auditor General do a value-for-money audit of Taron."

I agree with this and will sign it and send it to the table with Katherine.

#### HYDRO RATES

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** "Whereas home heating and electricity are essential utilities for northern families;

"Whereas the government has a duty and an obligation to ensure that essential goods and services are affordable for all families living in the north and across the province;

"Whereas government policy such as the Green Energy Act, the harmonized sales tax, cancellation of gas plants in Oakville and Mississauga have caused the price of electricity to artificially increase to the point it is no longer affordable for families or small business;

"Whereas electricity generated and used in north-western Ontario is among the cleanest and cheapest to produce in Canada, yet has been inflated by government policy;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To take immediate steps to reduce the price of electricity in the northwest and ensure that residents and businesses have access to energy that properly reflects the price of local generation."

I support this wholeheartedly, will sign it and give it to page Aly to deliver to the table.

#### SHALE BEACH

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ministry of Transportation closed public access to Shale Beach off Highway 26 in the town of Blue Mountains suddenly and with no consultation; and

"Whereas the closure will impact fisherman, swimmers and visitors who have been frequenting the beach for generations with no problem; and

"Whereas the closure will remove one of the only wheelchair-accessible fishing locations in the area; and

"Whereas the McGuinty-Wynne Liberal government won't let Ontarians enjoy anything for free anymore without implementing a new tax or a new fee;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Premier Kathleen Wynne and the Minister of Transportation immediately restore access to Shale Beach so that residents can continue to enjoy the beach and all that it has to offer for generations to come."

Madam Speaker, I agree with this petition and I will sign it.

#### DOG OWNERSHIP

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas aggressive dogs are found among all breeds and mixed breeds; and

"Whereas breed-specific legislation has been shown to be an expensive and ineffective approach to dog bite prevention; and

"Whereas problem dog owners are best dealt with through education, training and legislation encouraging responsible behaviour;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To repeal the breed-specific sections of the Dog Owners' Liability Act ... and any related acts, and instead implement legislation that encourages responsible ownership of all dog breeds and types."

I couldn't agree more. Over 1,000 dogs have lost their lives because of this law. I'm going to give it to Taylor to be delivered to the table.

#### HOME WARRANTY PROGRAM

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** I have a petition here.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas new homeowners and home builders across Ontario have expressed significant dissatisfaction with the Taron Warranty Corp.; and

"Whereas this government monopoly needs to be held accountable for the repeated failing reported by both new homebuyers and home builders they were created to benefit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Minister of Consumer Services as follows:

"That the minister request the Auditor General do a value-for-money audit of Taron."

Madam Speaker, I agree with this petition and I will affix my name to it.

#### PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ministry of Health is planning on cutting physiotherapy services to seniors in long-term-care homes—from an estimated \$110 million to \$58.5 million; and

"Whereas with this change seniors will not receive the care they are currently entitled to through their current OHIP physiotherapy providers, who the government plans to delist from OHIP on August 1st, 2013; and

"Whereas the government has announced that the funding level, the number of treatments a resident could receive, has not been specified and will be reduced from a maximum of 150 visits/year to some unknown level, which means the hours of care and number of staff providing seniors with physiotherapy will also be significantly reduced as of August 1st, 2013; and

"Whereas our current OHIP physiotherapy providers have been providing seniors with individualized treatments for over 48 years, and these services have been proven to help seniors improve in their activities of daily living, mobility, pain and falls risk;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To review and reverse this drastic cut of OHIP physiotherapy services to seniors, our most vulnerable population, and to continue with the \$110 million physiotherapy funding for seniors in long-term-care homes."

I will affix my signature and send this with page Gabrielle.

#### AIR QUALITY

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

"Whereas Ontario's Drive Clean program was implemented only as a temporary measure to reduce high levels of vehicle emissions and smog; and

"Whereas vehicle emissions have declined so significantly from 1998 to 2010 that they are no longer among the major domestic contributors of smog in Ontario; and

"Whereas the overwhelming majority of reductions in vehicle emissions is the result of factors other than Drive Clean, such as tighter manufacturing standards for emission-control technologies; and

"Whereas the environment minister has ignored advances in technology and introduced a new, computerized emissions test that is less reliable and prone to error; and

"Whereas the new Drive Clean test has caused the failure rate to double in less than two months as a result of technical problems with the new emissions testing method; and

"Whereas this new emissions test has caused numerous false 'fails,' which have resulted in the overcharging of testing fees for Ontario drivers and car dealerships,



thereby causing unwarranted economic hardship and stress;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"That the Minister of the Environment takes immediate steps to begin phasing out the Drive Clean program."

I'm pleased to support the petition, affix my signature and send it to the table with page Megan.

### COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre is recognized as one of the leading primary care providers in northwestern Ontario, providing essential services to those living in not only Ignace, but across northwestern Ontario; and

"Whereas a 2010 rent increase by the government of Ontario has threatened the long-term viability of the health centre's operations; and

"Whereas the rent being charged to the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre is much higher than rent being charged to similar operations in other communities and far surpasses 'market rent' for a small community in northwestern Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately rectify the situation and ensure the long-term viability of the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre by either reducing rent, transferring ownership of the building to the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre, or through capital funds to build a new facility that better suits the community's needs."

I support this petition wholeheartedly and will give this to page Kyle to deliver to the table.

### SHINGLES VACCINE

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas one in three Ontarians will experience shingles in their lifetime; and

"Whereas shingles is a painful and stressful condition; and

"Whereas a vaccine is available for preventing shingles and is recommended for all seniors; and

"Whereas the shingles vaccine is currently not covered by OHIP;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To ensure the shingles vaccine is covered under OHIP for all Ontarians."

I agree with this and I will be passing it off to page Ravicha.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### ORDER OF BUSINESS

Resuming the debate adjourned on September 30, 2013, on the amendment to the motion to apply a timetable to certain business of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate? The member for Davenport.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** Thank you, Speaker. As always, I'm happy to rise and speak on behalf of my constituents of Davenport, but I'm also extremely disappointed today to be speaking about the matter that's before this House. Today we're speaking about an agreement that was reached between the Liberal government of Ontario and the official opposition, the Conservative Party. They've reached an agreement where they've chosen to bundle a number of good bills together and hide among them a poison pill.

**1600**

It's clear that the Liberals and Tories have been approached by construction giant EllisDon and that they're now working together to prioritize and fast-track a bill that will interfere with the bargaining rights of folks in the construction sector, at the behest of this one company. Of course, as we all know, EllisDon is a major financial supporter of both the Liberals and the Conservatives.

Meanwhile, most of Ontarians are still waiting for this government to deliver on issues that matter to them, and most people in this province do not have tens of thousands of dollars to contribute to the parties in power. It seems that everyday people in this province are having trouble getting the attention of this government.

Speaker, as you know, I spend as much time as I can out in my community listening to constituents. What I hear is that they want to see government action. They want to see government action on transit, on clean trains, on quality child care, on decent income supports, on fair wages, on affordable housing, on good jobs. I have not heard from one single constituent who wants us to act on behalf of EllisDon, to break their collective agreement. Speaker, I wonder if any member in this House has heard that. Is there any member in this House who has heard from a constituent who said, "Put EllisDon first"?

It's mind-boggling that the Liberal government and the Conservative opposition are now conspiring to pass Bill 74 and put this one special interest before all the other bills, all the other motions, and all the other business that is before this House.

Where is the programming motion for the issues that actually affect everyday people in this province? Where is the programming motion that puts the interests of people first? Where is the urgency when it comes to serving the people of Ontario? Where is the government action? Where is the collaboration amongst Liberals and Conservatives to pass legislation that would make Ontario a better place to live?

The Liberal government and the Conservative opposition will try to say that they are, in fact, acting in the

interests of Ontarians, that they need this programming motion to pass the seven other bills that have been bundled along with Bill 74. I want the people of this province to know—and maybe more sensible members of the government and official opposition will hear this clearly, too—a programming motion was not necessary to pass these bills. The other bills all had the support of the three parties in this House.

Bill 30 is the Skin Cancer Prevention Act. It is largely the result of the hard work done by my colleague the MPP for Nickel Belt, and it had support from all three parties. Bill 70 is the Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act; Bill 55, the Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act; Bill 60, the Wireless Services Agreements Act: All of these had some weaknesses, but we support them in principle, and they would have moved forward. Bill 36, the Local Food Act, had the support of all three parties, and we had no problems with Bill 77, a private member's bill that promotes carbon monoxide safety.

It is unfortunate that the Liberals and Conservatives have chosen to bundle these bills with a poison pill, Bill 74. They have chosen to bundle these together in an attempt to ram through a bill and privilege one powerful company in the province of Ontario.

Speaker, now good bills have gotten dragged down in this debate. Let's take the example of Bill 36. It's unfortunate because today we should be in committee talking about Bill 36, the Local Food Act. We've been debating the Local Food Act for some time, and while the bill is pretty empty in many ways, it is something that constituents of mine and people across the province do want to talk about and make stronger. People are aware that the main reason the Local Food Act took so long to get through second reading in the first place was that the Conservatives put up 33 out of 37 members to speak to it. I want to make sure that people across the province understand that. It's a bill that they support, and it's a bill that they filibustered for hours on end. Of course, this isn't unique to Bill 36. The Conservatives have tied up—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** It's always interesting when people start heckling. It means you've touched a nerve, and the nerve that we're talking about here is the fact that the Conservatives filibustered for hours and days on end on a bill they support and they're now trying to push through, mostly to push through an anti-democratic bill. The Conservatives have tied up this House by filibustering bills they support, and now they try to say that this motion today is necessary to get those bills passed.

Although the Local Food Act had already passed and gone to committee, hearings will be delayed now because the Local Food Act has been included within this programming motion which we're still debating today. How long will it be delayed? It's unclear, but if the Conservatives hadn't filibustered the bill and then included it in the programming motion, we wouldn't have this program. Another issue is, of course, as I mentioned, that hearings have been sped up and condensed. I know that

there are a lot of stakeholders that we've outreached to, people who want to provide input into the committee, and these stakeholders and food groups will not get a chance to make a presentation at the hearings because those spots have now been filled up.

So how can this government and the official opposition spend so much time saying that they support local food and the new Local Food Act, and yet they shut out the very folks who can advise on this bill and make it stronger? It's clear that the Liberal government and the Conservative opposition have chosen instead bills like Bill 36 as a shield basically to try to deflect criticism away from their collaboration over this one bill, Bill 74. In the process, they are slowing down the Local Food Act and they're forgoing inputs of people who should be having their voice heard, just to make sure that their wealthy friends are put first.

That is why the Liberals and Conservatives voted against our leader Andrea Horwath's motion for unanimous consent yesterday morning to remove Bill 74 from the programming motion. That is the issue that we're speaking to today. Our House leader has moved to remove Bill 74 from this programming motion so that we can debate it separately. But of course, the members opposite and beside us today refuse to speak to this amendment.

But what would be the issue with removing Bill 74? If the real issue is to fast-track legislation in this House, then why not remove Bill 74 from the package to ensure that the other seven bills do get to committee as soon as possible? In fact, I can assist the members opposite and beside us and can suggest a few replacement bills that could go in instead of Bill 74. If members in this House want to help out the construction industry, why don't they replace Bill 74? Why don't they replace it with the Prompt Payment Act, for example? All three parties support it, and it would make sure that people working in the construction industry get the payments they deserve on time.

What about a private member's bill from the Conservatives, Bill 56, to promote the recycling of aggregates? There you go. It's good for our environment. It's good for construction. It's good for industry. This would be a good bill to fast-track to committee.

What about Bill 83, the government-sponsored anti-SLAPP legislation? A member across the way has introduced this legislation before. It has the support of all three parties here. It's something we need to move ahead with to protect those who are speaking out on behalf of the public interest, much as the NDP is doing here today, but since introducing that legislation before the summer break, the government has barely moved on it at all.

Finally, there are plenty of great ideas coming from our side of the floor. We have greater protection of tenants. We have inclusionary zoning that would build more affordable housing. We have electric trains for the Union-Pearson express air-rail link. We'd like to protect servers working in our restaurants to make sure they can keep their tips. All these could have been included.



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The Liberal government and the Conservative Party, instead, have teamed up together for Bill 74, and they refuse to move it from this programming motion. Bill 74 is not the type of legislation anyone in this province should want to see go forward. First, the government should not be interfering with bargaining rights or the bargaining process. Secondly, it sets an extremely bad precedent: to use legislation to get a construction company out of a master agreement.

Why are these two parties supporting Bill 74? We know that the official opposition likes to position itself as anti-labour and anti-union, because, of course, we can't have the people in this province having good jobs, making good benefits. It's their agenda for the race to the bottom, the race to destroy pensions in this province.

But, Speaker, the most important question is, why is this Liberal government ramming through this legislation? Why is the social justice Premier of Ontario forcing through this legislation?

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** Exactly.

Speaker, for the folks who have read the papers, the investigative work has already been done, the numbers have been presented, and they tell us a story. The story is this: The Liberal Party received \$125,000 from EllisDon, making it their largest corporate donor. And the Conservatives also received \$32,000. This bill that they're pushing through today, they hope will curry favour for both of them.

Our leader and our members here on this side have tried very hard over the past few days to get an answer from this government on this bill. As my colleagues who spoke yesterday on this matter have said, sometimes a question unanswered is, in fact, an answer in itself.

On Wednesday, September 25, our House leader asked the Premier who she met with from EllisDon regarding Bill 74. She wouldn't answer the question and referred it to the Minister of Labour.

On Thursday, September 26, our leader, Andrea Horwath, asked the Premier again who has been lobbying her to support this bill. The Premier responded that there were "a range of bills" that were part of the programming motion and that "everyone in this House meets with people from across the business and labour spectrum." And, Speaker, we heard the Premier repeat a similar answer today in question period.

On September 30, our leader asked if the Premier or her staff had discussed the EllisDon bill with the company or anyone working on behalf of that company in the last six months, and whether the Premier could confirm reports that Bill 74 was crafted by lobbyists at StrategyCorp. The Premier first claimed not to understand the scope of the questions, and then she said it was due to the convolutions in the questions. But, in reality, the questions were very clear. It's just that the Premier didn't have a good answer for them.

Finally, today, after days of questioning, we received an admission from the Premier that her staff did meet

with representatives from EllisDon. Of course the Premier said, "I didn't deny those meetings took place," but what she did was to stall and obfuscate.

When pressed on the sticky issues, like why the Premier's office would take these meetings when the matter was, in fact, before the courts, and why the Premier would then feel it was necessary to weigh in on this matter and call it an issue of levelling the playing field, the Premier went back to her standard non-answer. Although the Premier and the House leader have tried to obfuscate and muddy the waters, their non-answers are answers in themselves, and the people in this province can see that.

The people of Ontario have not forgotten that the last time the Liberals and Conservatives worked so closely together to push legislation forward so quickly was when they teamed up for Bill 115. People in this province see this pattern when the Liberals and Conservatives work together and how this Liberal government prioritizes their own interests above the interests of the people of Ontario.

Here's a good example, Speaker: When the intensive behavioural intervention therapy was before the courts, the Liberal government, at that time, said they couldn't do anything to move the issue forward. Why? Because they didn't want to. But now, of course, with EllisDon's agreement before the courts, the Liberal government has no problem ramming through Bill 74. In fact, they can't pass it fast enough. Even while members of this Legislature are working together to put the interests of one company first, they're not putting the interests of families first—but just one company.

Families across the province, people in my riding of Davenport, have priorities that they want to see members of this Legislature focus on. Tenants at Standard Lofts in my riding of Davenport are still waiting to get some rent control. At the Stop Community Food Centre in my riding, people are lining up for food again today, waiting for government action so that they can feed their families. People across this province are waiting on this government, waiting for them to implement social assistance recommendations that they've stalled for years and years. They are waiting for this government to lower their auto insurance rates like they promised. They are waiting for this government to take action to create jobs for youth. The people of Ontario are waiting for this government to cut home care wait times. They are waiting for this government to create a sustainable transit plan for this province. They are waiting for a cycling strategy. People are waiting on this government to invest in our infrastructure, even as it crumbles around us. People on reserves in our province are waiting for clean water. People in Scarborough are waiting for the government to come to the table with a plan that actually makes sense. People on minimum wage are waiting for government action to make sure that we have a fair wage in this province of Ontario.

Members in this Legislature continue to wait, too, for answers when it comes to the gas plants and the way the government has abused the public purse here in Ontario.

But this Liberal government has a message for all of us, and it's this: Sorry, everyone. The Premier is too busy arranging for the passage of Bill 74 for their good friends EllisDon. So take a number. Get in line. Maybe get your chequebooks out.

Talk about a double standard. If it's Ontarians waiting for acting on this government, they can wait, but if it's important for a major Liberal Party donor, hurry on up, whip the vote; everyone votes yes, and don't stray from the talking points.

Of course, it's not that the Liberals have a monopoly when it comes to double standards in this Parliament. I remember that just a few weeks ago, at the beginning of this session, two members of the opposition caucus lost their portfolios, one for exploiting a loophole for his own personal gain and the other for cautioning against creating a loophole to exploit for the party's gain. Did these two deserve the same punishment? It seems contradictory to me.

I think that both Liberals and Tories should consider this very carefully: What message does this legislation send to the people of this province? I believe it sends the message that the Ontario government's priorities and our democratic process are up for sale to the highest bidder. People are receiving this message loud and clear. I think it's why people just grow more and more cynical about politics in the province of Ontario. It's why people think that politicians are all the same. They look at these two parties, the Liberals and Conservatives, and they can't tell the difference, because there isn't any difference when you continue to put the interests of your party above the people of the province.

I hope members around this House will think long and hard about this debate today, think about their duties as representatives of all Ontarians, not just their own parties and not just some private company. I hope that at the end of this reflection by members of this House, their consciences will kick in and they will vote with us to remove Bill 74 from the programming motion.

I'm an impatient person. There are lots of things that I wish we could get done immediately, and it troubles me to no end that the one thing that the majority of members of this House are choosing to prioritize is an anti-democratic bill that serves the interests of one wealthy political backer in this province.

I hope that all members of this House will heed the call, will understand that this is not in the best interests of anyone except for the company that gives them money, and that they will vote with us to take Bill 74 out of this programming motion and to move forward with the business that's important to the people of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

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**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I've been here a couple of weeks, but they tell me you know you're going to have a bad day when you show up for work in the morning and the mayor of Mississauga, Hazel McCallion, is outside your door, waiting to bend your ear on something. Well,

Hazel wasn't outside my door this morning, but I knew I was going to have a bad day when I showed up for work fighting a head cold, having a sore throat, and my party whip said, "Oh, by the way, get ready. You're going to speak for 20 minutes today on the EllisDon bill."

Let me say at the outset I have nothing personal against the company EllisDon. I know they're trying to circumvent a collective agreement signed decades ago by having their friends in the Liberal and Conservative parties impose legislation that overrides free collective bargaining.

I knew Don Smith, the founder of EllisDon. I was saddened to hear of his passing earlier this year. I remember his wife, Joan, when I was a reporter and she was a minister in David Peterson's Liberal cabinet. I've been to their home. A long, long time ago, my father-in-law, Andy Simko, was a friend of Joan's when they were active on the association of provincial housing authorities. My wife, Gale, went to Western with one of the Smiths's daughters, and the Smiths—I don't know if you know this—had a golden retriever. The dog's name was Molson. I know this because my wife ended up with one of the litter, a beautiful male dog named Boomer. He was a great dog, and he came from Molson's litter from the Smith family.

I can freely stand here and tell you that EllisDon builds fine buildings and facilities, and they do so with a qualified and a unionized workforce. Their work is top-notch. The employees excel in their trades. They set the standard for other construction trades. I like the fact that they're in a union that helped to set these high standards.

I used to be a reporter, and when I started out many years ago in the private sector, my goal was to get a job at the CBC because, at the time, I felt the CBC set the standard for broadcast journalism in this country; and yes, the CBC was, and is today, a unionized workforce. In my opinion, CBC journalism is unbiased and based on fairness to all. Integrity is earned by people basing their life's work on being fair and unbiased in their approach.

After working in private radio and TV, and a short stint as a print journalist at the Windsor Star, I joined the CBC in Windsor in 1975.

Before I get too far into this EllisDon debate, allow me the opportunity to thank the voters in Windsor—Tecumseh for placing their trust in me and allowing me to be their voice here at Queen's Park. I'd like to thank the hundreds of volunteers who worked over the hot, dog days of summer on my by-election campaign. I am truly honoured to be one of the 107 members of Ontario's provincial Parliament.

As this is my inaugural address to this body, I want to take the time necessary to tell you about myself, my riding and the journey that I've been on in order to get here. I'd like to say thank you again to all members from all three parties who have welcomed me to the Legislature, and that includes the Speaker, Clerk Deborah Deller, her staff, and all the dedicated young pages as well.

A special thank you, I believe, is warranted to my leader, Andrea Horwath, and the other members of my



NDP caucus who have welcomed me into their Queen's Park family with open arms.

I've mentioned one of my previous careers, as a reporter. Politically, I travelled the province reporting to the various CBC stations with David Peterson in 1985 when he became Premier, I was on the bus with Bob Rae in 1995 when he lost the job, and I went around the province twice with Howard Hampton on two of his provincial campaigns.

I was also active at the CBC with my union. Going back over the years, I was the national secretary for the old Canadian Wire Service Guild. I was the vice-president for central Canada with the Canadian Media Guild. We were affiliated with The Newspaper Guild, which is an international union based in Washington, DC. At the time, we had 30,000 members. I served as chair of the Canadian district council of The Newspaper Guild. I was actually the first Canadian elected at large to TNG's international executive board, and I served three terms in that position, leading the polls the last time, I might say, which meant that reporters at the Washington Post and the New York Times were voting for me, a television reporter from Windsor, Ontario, Canada.

Eventually our union TNG, The Newspaper Guild, merged with the much larger CWA, the Communications Workers of America, and we had 600,000 members. I served two terms as TNG-CWA's vice-president for eastern Canada before stepping down as I prepared to retire from the CBC. I was a member of the union's national bargaining committee and the national grievance committee. This was at the CBC, and I was on the picket line only once in more than 30 years as a CBC employee. I was on the bargaining team. We bargained for 18 months. We didn't get very far. I'd get on the train in Windsor on Sunday night, come up to Toronto, bargain all week and go home on Friday night. I didn't do it steady for 18 months. We'd sometimes take a break for a week or two, but then it was back on the train, back up here. Actually, it's much like I'm doing now, coming up on the train on Sunday night, only going home on Thursday instead of Friday.

That was a lot of fun, bargaining, except at the end of it the CBC decided the way to settle this was to lock us out for a couple of months, and they kept us out. They kept us out over the summer, and they only brought us back because it was hockey season. It's like now. They brought us back because they wanted Hockey Night in Canada back on the air. So I learned from that, and I learned to respect free collective bargaining, and that's why I oppose this bill.

I retired from the CBC in 2006, and I was elected to city council in Windsor a few months later. As a Windsor councillor, I was elected three times to the board of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and three times to the board of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, once as an AMO vice-president and chair of the large urban caucus.

My wife, Gale, and I have two wonderful children, Andrew and Lacey, two beautiful granddaughters, Paisley and Arwin, and a lovely daughter-in-law, Lisa.

Before me, Windsor-Tecumseh was represented by Dwight Duncan. I've known Dwight for—well, more than 30 years anyway. I knew him when he worked for Herb Gray, when he worked for Bill Wrye, and I covered him as a city councillor when he was on council and I was still reporting. I've always believed that Dwight came out of the womb wearing a red diaper, he was always so Liberal in everything that he did. But he was a good member here. He served in several provincial cabinets, but chose to retire and not to serve under the current leader of his party.

Before Mr. Duncan, my riding was held for 30 years by New Democrats. You may remember the names: Wayne Lessard, Dave Cooke and, if you go back far enough, Fred Burr. I'll get back to Mr. Burr in a moment.

Let me tell you about my great riding. People who live in the Pelee peninsula or the 100 Mile Peninsula or "Canada South" as my friend Fred Sorrell nicknamed it many years ago—we border the Detroit River and Lake St. Clair. We have a rich history dating back to the 1700s.

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The War of 1812 was fought in our area—General Brock and the great Shawnee warrior Tecumseh. Tecumseh helped save our nation from the American invaders, which helped carve out our Canadian identity. In fact, I recently had the opportunity to spend a bit of time with one of Tecumseh's direct descendants, who happens to be married to one of the direct descendants of the great American warrior Geronimo.

Last weekend, actually, I was in the neighbouring riding of Windsor West at the Les Amis de Duff-Baby fundraiser at the Duff-Baby mansion. This is a home that dates back to the 1700s. It was a fur trading post. It's still used today. In fact, several provincial ministries have offices in the building.

Windsor-Tecumseh was an important stop as well on the Underground Railway. We had a colourful past during Prohibition years. It's interesting when you think about it. During Prohibition, the ships would come into Hiram Walker in Walkerville, and there would be a bill of lading saying that they're going to Cuba. For some reason the geography must have been different then, because they would make three, four, five or six trips a day to Cuba and back, taking the alcohol to Cuba and coming back for another load. I don't know how they did that, but it happened.

It's also still the home of Canadian Club, Wiser's and the Walkerville Brewery. Windsor-Tecumseh is the home of the Canadian automotive industry. Chrysler and Ford still call Windsor home, but General Motors has pulled out.

We have our problems. Our local unemployment rate is among the highest in Ontario. Cross-border air pollution from steel mills and coal-burning power plants in Michigan and Ohio pose many challenges for us. We have higher rates of respiratory problems and certain cancers than other parts of Ontario. As I referenced at my committee hearing on government appointments earlier

today, our local public health unit, despite all of these extra concerns and problems, gets less provincial funding than any other health unit in Ontario, and that should be addressed as soon as possible.

I mentioned Fred Burr earlier. Mr. Burr was a bit of a prophet. In his maiden speech in 1968, he quoted Dr. John Hanlon, who was then the commissioner of health in Wayne county—or Detroit—just across the river from Windsor. Actually, it's directly across the river and it is due north from Windsor. Because of a quirk in geography and the way the river bends, Detroit is due north from downtown Windsor. In Mr. Burr's maiden speech, the topic was air pollution. The quote was—and this was 45 years ago: "Mankind will die of massive epidemics of respiratory diseases and suffocation within the next hundred years. There is an aerial sewer 12 to 14 miles thick all around the earth and there is just no more space to dump this pollution in the air."

Think about that. They saw that coming, and we still haven't done very much about it. We continue to live in and suffer from bad air and air pollution to this very day.

Our native leaders remind us that we don't own this land; we are but caretakers for future generations. Unfortunately, we're not doing a good job as environmental stewards.

I've tried my part. I have been chair and vice-chair twice of the Essex Region Conservation Authority. ERCA has planted six million trees since it was founded back in the 1970s. I'm a member of the Citizens Environmental Alliance, a past member of the Windsor Essex County Environment Committee, and I served on FCM's environmental committee as well.

I know of the need for more attention on environmental issues. I know of the need for more funding for public transit, just as I know of the need for more funding for public and subsidized housing and more money for public libraries.

I certainly know of the need for more jobs. Windsor-Tecumseh has lost too many manufacturing jobs in the past 10 years. To me, this points to the absolute need for a national jobs policy and national automotive policy. We need real jobs, not part-time, precarious, poverty jobs in the hospitality industry.

Windsor-Tecumseh is the home of the Rand formula, which protects workers' rights and should never be weakened or taken away. The Rand formula came about after a 99-day strike against the Ford Motor Co. in 1945; 11,000 workers were out for 99 days. Many more than that actually came out to the picket lines—maybe 20,000 all together—in support, from December 12 to September 19; 68 years ago today. In fact, today Drouillard Road in Windsor would have been blockaded. They were out fighting for the Rand formula 68 years ago today.

What did they achieve? They won the right—if you benefit from the union's bargaining and their bargaining strategy, you pay union dues. You can't opt out. It's as simple as that. If you're going to benefit from somebody's collective bargaining, you're going to have to contribute to all of that. We in Windsor-Tecumseh

cherish, and will fight to defend with our hearts and souls, the Rand formula. I know that other people in this chamber want to play around with that, and that will be a fight.

If I can switch gears for a moment, I want you to know that I have helped with community charities. For years, I've been an active fundraiser for the United Way, for the Hospice of Windsor and Essex County, for the Easter Seals Telethon, and many other local charities in Windsor-Tecumseh. My wife is a co-founder of the Do Good Divas, a group of women raising money for health care in Windsor-Tecumseh, for local hospitals and a cancer care centre. The Divas have been promoting the need for organ donation and organ transplants in order to save more lives.

Windsor-Tecumseh is a caring community, and one of our biggest assets is the generosity of the membership of our trade unions, including those that work for EllisDon.

I have to edit as I go, Speaker, because I didn't realize how much 20 minutes was, actually.

Instead of taking the time to talk about the EllisDon bill, what the government could be doing is trying to find a solution to other labour disputes in this province. The University of Windsor members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees have been on the picket line for nearly a month. The school year may soon be in jeopardy for thousands of students. That would be a valuable investment of time, as opposed to taking time away. Or involve yourself in the municipal strike in Bonfield, where municipal workers have been on strike since August 1, the date of the five by-elections, when I won the cherished right to be here today speaking in this great chamber.

On election day, I was going door to door trying to get the vote out—

**Interjection:** You were very successful.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I was successful, yes; thank you.

I knocked on one door at about a quarter after 6 on election night. I went up to this stranger, and I said, "If you haven't voted yet, I would like it very much if you would consider voting for me." I didn't know this lady, but she said, "I want to lay something heavy on you. I voted Liberal in the past, but they've lost their credibility with me." She was making reference to all the scandals that were part of the platform in the last campaign. She said, "They've lost their integrity. I'm putting this on your shoulders as something to remember. I've always considered you as a man of integrity. I will be supporting you because of that—don't let me down," she said. "I want you to remember this: Don't change when you get to Queen's Park. Remember where you came from, and never, ever risk your integrity." I have this, and I'm going to put this up in my office here and in my constituency office.

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I think what the government is doing with this bill is saying to the people of Ontario, "We haven't changed. We are still putting our integrity at risk by stripping away the bargaining rights of collective unions."



**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** On a point of order, Speaker: I know that we don't have questions and comments because we're in the middle of a motion, but I would just like to thank the member for an excellent speech, and I look forward to working with him, as we all do in this House, in the years to come.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** It's not a point of order, but thank you.

Further debate?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak and to add my voice to the discussion. We are discussing the programming motion, and I have a number of issues that I want to cover. One is the principle, generally speaking, of a programming motion. We've been referring to this motion, and particularly with respect to private member's Bill 74, and we've been using the language that it's "ramming through a bill." Some have complained that this is inconsistent, that when we wanted to put forward a certain bill, we were okay with a programming motion, and in this case, why are we not?

I want to raise some distinct differences, make some distinctions, if you will. I know the Attorney General will appreciate this, that I want to distinguish our case versus other cases, as we often do in law. There are certain bills that address an emergency circumstance; there is an exigent set of problems or there is something so pressing that we immediately need to act on it. Perhaps an example could be if there is a certain additive or chemical that we need to outlaw and ban outright because we have conclusive evidence that suggests that additive or that chemical needs to be banned. Perhaps, in those circumstances, we need to move quickly to make sure that we protect folks.

There might be other pressing circumstances that require us to move quickly. There are bills that have a clear benefit for the people of Ontario, broadly speaking, and in some circumstances, if there is a bill that will immediately impact the lives of people in a beneficial way, the citizens of Ontario, that might be something we need to move quickly on.

There is something quite important, particularly a bill or a motion that would move towards increasing accountability, that would actually put a check and balance on the government itself. That's something where we have a priority; that's a priority to move quickly so that we can actually put that accountability in place.

And then we have a bill that will benefit one company, that would seek to address the concerns of a singular company in the entire province of Ontario. Now, there's a clear distinction between the other circumstances that I have addressed and a bill that would address one company only. When we were speaking about the Financial Accountability Office of Ontario, that was a bill that would provide accountability for this province. That's an important bill. That's something that would actually provide some accountability, that would provide us with

an ability to put a check and balance on the government—an independent organization that would have the mandate to ensure that whatever the government was promising, whatever the government was estimating, was in fact correct. That is something that is certainly a priority, and putting that bill forward in a manner that is quick and efficient is completely different from having a bill that benefits one company.

The principle in democracy is that we need to encourage debate. We need to ensure that everyone has their voice, that the people elected to represent their communities, that are representatives of their communities, can actually have a voice, can actually talk about the concerns of their constituents; they can raise those concerns in debate. When we put a limitation on that, we're limiting that member's ability to represent their community. That's why, as a principle, we don't support programming motions, because they limit debate and they limit democracy—unless there's some exigent, some emergency, some pressing circumstances.

As a principle, we need to ensure that we uphold the principles of democracy. I've said this time and time again: One of the most important principles of democracy is dissent, is the right to express your dissatisfaction, your disagreement, with any particular law, with any particular principle. If that principle is one of the most cherished principles of democracy, then silencing or ending debate is contrary to that.

It's ironic because we're here in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario; this is an institute of democracy. This is the home of democracy in the province of Ontario. If it's in a place like this that we're silencing debate, we, who are democratically elected, are working contrary to democratic principles. It's for that reason we say that the government is ramming through a bill because they are silencing and ending debate on a bill that's not pressing. There are no exigent circumstances; there are no emergency circumstances here. This is not a bill that needs to be programmed, and that's why we oppose the programming motion broadly.

Why we oppose this bill specifically is one of the other principles that we stand for, and we should stand for: In the country that we live in, there is the supreme law, which is the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms basically enshrines some of the most important beliefs that we have, and it protects those beliefs. So no matter what laws are passed in any particular province, no matter what laws are passed in any particular city, there is a supreme law which protects certain fundamental rights that we believe in.

One of the fundamental rights that we have—and it's more than just a fundamental right, I would argue; I would assert that it's a human right—is a right to collectively bargain, a right to organize. A right to organize and collectively bargain are just principles that we have as something that we've worked on and developed over years and years and fought for so that people could get together and organize themselves. They should be able to organize themselves in any manner. That's why we have

the right to have political organizations; we have the right to have community organizations. People can get together and organize themselves to work for the benefit of their communities. They can work for the benefit of their own organization in their own areas. That's a fundamental value that we support. It's enshrined in the charter for a reason; it's something that we value.

When we limit the ability of any group to collectively bargain, essentially what we're doing is, with the stroke of a pen, we're abrogating a fundamental right. We're abrogating that ability to collectively bargain, to organize. There's a distinct connection between the ability to collectively bargain and to organize. So that's why it's a violation of a human right.

The Canadian Civil Liberties Association has also spoken out on the principle that was behind Bill 115, that the idea of Bill 115 was that it was a bill that fundamentally violated our human right to organize, to collectively bargain. On that same level, on that same tone, that's what this Bill 74 seeks to do. It's for that reason—on a human right level, a right that we all enjoy as humans—that we oppose that.

When we look at the priorities of this government, the government is putting forward this programming motion and putting forward this bill—it's a private member's bill that the government has signed on to and now is working in tandem with the Conservatives to pass. It's entitled the Fairness and Competitiveness in Ontario's Construction Industry Act. Now, at a time in this province when we have so many pressing concerns, so many pressing issues, three top-of-mind issues that I can think of and that I'm sure many of the folks here—their constituents themselves are probably calling them regularly, or if not, when they go to community events, I'm sure you get this feedback. People are concerned about the lack of jobs; they're concerned about the cost of living in our societies, given the fact that people don't have jobs and they don't have the ability to earn a living and the cost of living is increasing every year, year by year; and they're also concerned about health care. These are three priorities in this province.

In terms of the government, the government should address these concerns, these priorities. They should make these issues a priority. While we're moving so quickly to put through this bill that would benefit one company, EllisDon, we're seeing the government move so slowly to implement changes to benefit the drivers of Ontario. We see the government—again, look at the priorities: big business, corporations like EllisDon, the insurance industry. They move so quickly to assist them; they move so quickly to address their concerns; they move so quickly to benefit them. But when it comes to the people of Ontario, the people that we are supposed to represent, they move so slowly.

1650

I'll give you a concrete example. In 2010, the finance minister enacted a series of amendments that slashed the benefits that the people of Ontario received—slashed those benefits with the stroke of a pen, did it in regula-

tion, put it through immediately, and that resulted in an immediate benefit to the insurance industry. They saved \$2 billion a year because of that change. That happened in 2010. From 2010 to 2011, from 2011 to 2012, and now we're nearing the end of 2013—for three years, the insurance industry has benefited from one of the most historically significant cuts in terms of their costs. They have seen such a significant cost reduction that their profits have increased at an astronomical level for three years. That's what the government is willing to do for insurance companies, for big business, for corporations.

Contrast that with the people of Ontario: The people of Ontario saw a premium increase of 5% from 2010 to 2011, and from 2011 to present, not even a 1% reduction in premiums—less than a 1% reduction. In total, from 2010 to present, the insurance rates in the province of Ontario have increased by 4%. That's an average of 4% that they have increased, at a time when the insurance industry has seen a cut, in terms of their Statutory Accident Benefits payouts, of 50%. They have seen a 50% decrease in their costs, but the premiums have increased by 5%. If there's nothing else that that makes clear, it makes clear this government's priorities. This government's priorities are big corporations and the insurance industry.

When it comes to looking at the priorities of this government, I urge the government to take steps to benefit the people of Ontario as opposed to the insurance industry. For that reason, we are opposed to the programming motion.

I am just going to thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I want to thank my team for the quick heads-up, Speaker.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Tell the staff what you need them to do.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** My friend from Trinity-Spadina—I think we not only share geography but often a heart. I enjoy his humour and his insights. If I ever leave this place, not in a box, I will have fond memories of him.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Call the whip.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Exactly. Thank you again.

I think this is making some progress, going forward. I think in a minority—I'm sorry; I haven't slept much lately. It has been a long few weeks.

This is, I think, one of the ways we're trying to manage together in this House through a minority government. It's interesting, the foils and ups and downs of trying to manage legislation through. A lot of good legislation has been presented in this House over the last year. There are a lot of rather remarkable private members' bills that have come out of all parties and members of all parties, and, as I have said many times in this House, my favourite part of the week here is Thursday afternoon, when we get to do private members' business.



The official opposition presented the opportunity, I think, responding in some of the discussion that the Premier had with the leader of the official opposition and the leader of the third party, to try and construct some pathways forward where we could get some broad agreement to move a number of pieces of legislation that have been somewhat stalled in this House forward, and I think that's a very positive thing.

I'm kind of proud to be a Canadian, and I say that because there is a level of reasonableness to our politics that seems to be absent in so many parts of the world. I think most of us are struck these days by turning on the news and watching the deadlock in Washington: an entire government shut down.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Yes. I appreciate that; thanks.

I can't imagine that we in this House would ever put politics so far ahead of the people at any point that we would be teetering on the closure of our national or provincial government. I think many of us are struck by the hyperpartisanship of the government in the United States, where legislation is almost never resolved, where what was supposed to have been decided in an election continues to be a debate, where they're trying to overturn their recently national health care system and where people can't get services and won't be able to get access to offices. Here, as Canadians, we try to be all about order and good government and about being somewhat polite.

I have often said that I have always found the partisan nature of this House most disappointing, and as new members come forward, I'm always impressed when they can maintain that sense of humour and non-partisanship. I think we all get caught up in it.

I would like to say a few positive things about our friends around the aisle. I think that there has been some maturity and some leadership around the programming motion, some reasonableness, while we didn't agree with everything, and there are some things that we would like in the bill. I'm sure there are some things they would like in the bill. But I think there was a sincere effort here to try to make this a more collaborative place and move things forward. This is a positive thing.

Also, it is not lost on me that for much of the last two years, the third party, the New Democratic Party, has been a very reasonable partner in this. They have not only brought forward some very good legislation—I think we have collaborated on some bills and shared many things, whether it's auto insurance or many other things—but there has been a spirit of co-operation there that I think has made this House work.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** You messed up this time.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** You know, as my friend from Welland said, we can all point to moments where we're in disagreement with what another party did. God knows, I don't know whether any one party is so virtuous that some of us who are members of it from time to time don't disagree with our own parties and our own government. We're all individuals and hopefully will never

become robots and automatons, that we drink the Kool-Aid so much that we believe in it, but there were a lot of good and progressive things that have happened.

I think you have to go back to the Bill Davis years or the Bill Davis minorities to find a time when we actually had a minority that started to work. I think there is a healthy skepticism out there in the public about politicians and politics—I think that's probably an overstated or maybe an over-made remark—but I represent a very politically and culturally diverse community; we're in it, and I get a lot of positive feedback from people who are staunch Liberals, staunch Conservatives, staunch New Democrats, staunch skeptics, or none of the above. My mother reminds me, because she watches question period every day, and she often says, "This is really a remarkable thing." She comments on people. My mother heard a speech the member for Parkdale–High Park made one day about human rights. My mother is quite a religious person and was quite impressed by that. It's always nice when you see people who watch this from a non-partisan perspective, who can pick this up.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** As you may have noticed, my friend from Simcoe–Grey, some of us are up here trying to talk out the clock, but I'm not saying anything that I don't mean and feel quite heartfelt about.

It is interesting, because I think there are some opportunities for members in a minority Legislature, whether it's a programming motion, and I think it's important that we don't see this as jamming something through. It's my view that each of these pieces of legislation certainly needs more debate. I think that members on both sides of the House will be critical to different degrees of the content of some of them—the need for amendments or outright disagreement—and I think it's very important that we all remember that before anything else, we're MPPs first and we have a responsibility to make sure that each of us is heard and each of us gets a fair hearing. I know that there have been concerns raised, but I think that is a shared view.

1700

It is a bit of a rush in the sense that so much of this legislation was not moving for such a long period of time. We were sort of, "Hurry up and wait; hurry up and wait," and now we're moving a great deal through, and I think we have to be cautious and wise and adjudicating in that.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Keep going? Oh, you have someone else? Just tell me when you get so sick of hearing my voice that you want to throw something at me. Sorry, Madam Speaker.

Keep going? Thank you very much.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** You're an idea man.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** It's so funny. One of my friends opposite refers to me as an idea man and usually calls me—what is it? I'm the transportation planner from Winnipeg. Is that the latest joke?

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Transportation expert.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Yes, well, I just want to put on the record here that in my mayoralty days, we actually cut our mill rate by 11%, cut the size of government by about 29%, and saw our credit rating go from AA- to AA+. I live in a city where the idea of a tax break is far away, so I don't mind the criticism. Check out the record, though. I have spent about 30 years of my life in urban development, regional development and planning at U of T with the Canadian Urban Institute—and we are stretching the pointer. I think the Speaker is going to tell me to get back on track.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I can sit down. I just want to formally apologize to all my colleagues for almost remotely carrying on the conversation to sustain this debate so important to our democracy, Madam Speaker. Thank you for your humour, and thank you to my colleagues for their patience with me for my much unexpected, to me, and impromptu presentation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** It's really a surprise and a privilege, of course, to have the opportunity to reply to the minister, but also, more importantly, to the government programming motion here today.

I think it's important to put on the record that the NDP have had quite a job of trying to filibuster this portion of the debate where all the House leaders get together and try to put some semblance of order to all the bills that are on the order paper. They weren't able to carry out the filibuster without the help of the late Peter Kormos, and I say that with all due respect. I think that Peter Kormos was a scholar in terms of knowing the rules of the House and how to use them effectively to the advantage of his party. A former friend of his, Cindy, is certainly aware of what I'm talking about.

Today the discussion from the NDP was quite enjoyable, and I think the member from Windsor—Tecumseh did an excellent job of revealing his history—an impressive history, I might comment, not just with the CBC but your role in chairing various things, whether it's AMO or the Federation of Canadian Municipalities or the union that you belonged to when you were in the broadcast business. It's a very impressive resumé that you brought to the debate.

Also, I listened because a very good friend of my family was the Conservative candidate down there—he's a young fellow, Robert de Verteuil. Robert has really no political affiliations to speak of. He did run for us. I knew him. He knew it was quite a risky occurrence. I think that when my wife was a teacher, he was a gifted child in the school who went on to become an engineer. I think he has a master's degree and he's kind of a consulting engineer for the auto industry, for Tata Motors and others. He went to school with my son. My son always thought that he was quite clever, but Robert was actually quite a bit more clever than he was at the time.

When I look at the work that's been done by our leader, Tim Hudak, to try and clear the deck, this is really

what this is about. Our House leader, Mr. Wilson, as well as Mr. Smith, our other House leader, has been working hard to make sure that we look after the people of Ontario, the jobs and the economy. I would say that they ended up with sort of a programming motion here that put together a number of bills, and those bills are what we're really talking about. In there, there's always some controversy. A lot of bills will go to committees and a lot of discussions within committees may clear up some of those roadblocks.

But I think if you look at it, the work done by Christine Elliott and France Gélinas on Bill 30, the skin cancer prevention, the tanning beds legislation—there's no one in this House that wants to put our young people at risk. I think Bill 70, the Regulated Health Professions Act, is another example of professions that need clarity in regulation with respect to health professions. I would say that in that bill, if it was in committee, I have some things that I would like to add to the regulated health professions, and that's the entitlement that doctors and dentists have today to have members of the family be a member of a non-capital corporation for the investments that these professionals make. That's a small amendment that's needed in that bill. It's not going to hurt anyone, but I think it would make doing business as a regulated health professional in Ontario easier for other than—doctors have it today and dentists have it. All the other regulated health—nurse practitioners don't have that tax privilege of non-voting members.

Bill 55, Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers: Once again, our leader Tim Hudak and our critic have been very open and clear that we want to have better protection for consumers. This dealt primarily, as I recall, with the real estate brokers act—there was a change there—but also the door-to-door salespeople. I think there will be some amendments moved in committee on that bill, as well.

The Local Food Act, Bill 36, that bill there, for instance—our member from Sarnia-Lambton, Bob Bailey, has done work on that and I think there could be a chance and I think a hope—and I hope the government House leader is listening on that side—to take some time and listen to Mr. Bailey's bill on providing farmers with a tax credit for food that's given to food banks and others. I think it's a wonderful, generous idea to respect farmers and to respect food. Food quality and food safety are very important.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Respecting rural Ontario.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Exactly, respecting rural Ontario, as my colleague Steve Clark said. I called him Smith earlier, but he's a very good friend of mine. The deputy House leader on our side, of course, is Steve Clark and he's done a lot of work. In fact, he's a very strong member on this side of the House. Mr. Clark is a person that I think had a serious hand in putting some of these bills, perhaps even Bill 74, in this legislation; I don't know. But I know he's strong about jobs and the economy. Every time he speaks in caucus, and indeed in this House, his first thought is for the young people in



Ontario that have no jobs. They have gone to college; they have the diploma. They've gone to university; they have the degree. They have no job. But they have a lot of debt because we have the highest tuition, in Ontario, of any province. Unbelievable.

You talk about job creation plans, and in this past budget, which has been passed, there was a fund, I think it was \$150 million or \$300 million, for youth unemployment. At least they acknowledged the problem, but I don't think they've done anything about it. I hate to get off topic, but they throw money at it. They set up a bureaucracy. There's probably somebody on an expense account travelling with their dog to BC to see how they're doing it. And imagine expensing a bus—oh, that's for the Pan Am Games. Don't get me started. That is scandalous. It's the third scandal. It's the triactor of scandals. We've got the Ornge helicopter and we've got the gas plants and now we've got the Pan Am and Parapan Am Games.

Look, there's so much more work to be done to strengthen the economy in Ontario, especially for our young people. I think sending the right signal, our leader Tim Hudak put 14, I believe it is, white papers out there. All of them can be tracked back to getting started. This motion here itself is so it clears the deck, and once the deck is cleared, we can get on with working towards strengthening the fundamentals of the economy.

Now, what are the fundamentals of the economy? To Premier Wynne, here's what I say to her personally: It's about the economy. I won't say the last thing because it's rude and crude. But if you really want to know how it all works, a very overly simplified explanation would be this: Ask yourself which came first, the quality of life that we enjoy, or used to enjoy, in Ontario, the standard of living that families expect or should expect, the health care, the education—which came first, the quality of living, the quality of life, or the economy?

1710

Well, look around the world. Economies that are suffering, like Greece and Italy and Spain and now as close as Michigan: Their economies are falling apart—the manufacturing sector, the resource sector, the price of electricity. Guess what? If you haven't got the economy working, there's a very high risk to the quality of life.

We see the early signs here in Ontario. This bill here, this motion, our leader, Tim Hudak, has made it very clear that he is willing to work together. In fact, in question period, our leader, Tim Hudak, said to the Premier the other day, "Take the plans." He offered the booklet. Take the plans. Plagiarize them. Help. He was sort of standing on the deck of the Titanic, almost, in Ontario, handing them the rescue manual, and they don't want a copy of it.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Life jacket.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Handing them a life jacket.

I know I'm perhaps a little bit off the script of this programming motion, but I again want to say this: the three or four players in this—I do have to say that if Peter Kormos was here, I'm sure it would be a done deal after

the debate this afternoon, because he had a certain knack for working together collegially and co-operatively with the House leaders. I know that our House leader, Jim Wilson, says it all the time: "If we could only get Mr. Milloy to listen."

**Interjection:** And where is he now?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Where is he? Well—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** I'd ask you to stay with the matter being debated.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** The member from London is here now. I just want him to hear that he could solve this riddle. This riddle that is before us all here this afternoon: It could be solved. The House leaders—I'm pretty sure two or three of them are working together. We can get this done. It's my understanding that until it's 20 to 6, that can't get done.

I'm just going to go on here. There's another bill I'm quite interested in; it's the Hawkins Gignac Act. There's a private member's bill that could save lives. Our member from Oxford, Ernie Hardeman, has brought this in; it has been supported. I can assure you now, all members want to save lives, or potentially. The family in his riding, where the inquest recommended that this become a mandatory piece of safety equipment in the home—the carbon monoxide detector. We have one in our home; I'd encourage all people to do so. Ernie Hardeman's reputation hangs on this debate of Bill 77.

The Registered Human Resources Professionals Act—that's Bill 32. I don't think I had the privilege of speaking to that bill, although I should have. It would be a shame if I didn't get the time, so I'll take it right now.

Here's the issue: I have a degree from the University of Toronto, and a specialist diploma as well in HR. I worked at it. I almost learned how to do the job while I was doing it. But I have the greatest respect for HR professionals today. The more important part of it is, the nature of work itself is changing.

This is mostly for the young people. When I grew up, in my generation—I'm 70, so it's past mine, I guess. In my generation, you had a job for life. It was like 30 years—you had a degree and all that kind of stuff; training, a skilled trade, that kind of thing. You were employed at Ford, General Motors, Chrysler, General Electric or IBM. What about our successful recent companies? The most recent one would be Research In Motion, BlackBerry. There's a company that's high tech; traded at \$100. Where is it now? Companies themselves will not last 30 years. There's no company today—GE is made up of several divisions, all of which are profit centres, and they just cut them off if they don't maintain profitability.

Who owns these companies? Shareholders do. Who are the main shareholders? They're pension funds. Why are all the pension funds bankrupt? Because all the companies are bankrupt.

That's where it comes back to Bill 74. If we don't start bringing some rules in that are friendly to investors, we'll have no investors. It does affect all of us. I think the human resource professionals know this. I think they

should be teaching our children in schools how to budget and how to look at what makes the world go round, what makes the wheel go round. Most of you children, the pages I'm talking to today, will have five jobs. And most of them won't be anywhere except working at your terminal at home. We're building infrastructure now for a world where everybody had to go to a bank to do banking, or law. That's all finished. As far as I'm concerned, it's global. You could be doing 90% of this stuff—you don't really need as much infrastructure and transit, I'm convinced.

I digress, but I am filling up the time quite nicely.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** No, but there are crib notes here. I am using crib notes here that have been supplied.

Here's the other issue. There's one here, the Select Committee on Developmental Services. Now, there's an example of good governance. This part here, quite frankly—listen very carefully. I'll tell you why. When we talk in almost any forum on social concerns today, it's about young people. Bullying has been mentioned, suicide has been mentioned, and children at risk of their environment itself—the school learning conditions, the home conditions with strife in families. This is an essential bill. We talk about children's mental health today. This committee was, I believe, struck in agreement with Christine Elliott and I believe France Gélinas, who is the critic for health for the NDP. And I believe in good conscience that the Liberal government as well—I would suspect that Kevin Flynn or somebody else over there, Jeff Leal or someone, would see how important this committee was. Now, the committee would be a select committee. This committee and its terms would allow them to look at best practices in other jurisdictions, whether it's potentially in Europe—I'd like to be on the committee—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** No, hang on. No, you can't take your dog on the plane with you, Steve. You can't take the dog on the plane, okay?

I am saying, though, in all seriousness, that they should talk to the—young children today should be a very large part of the voice. I meet with our local children's aid. They're short of money. It's the way that we deliver programs today that aren't geared to the individual's needs. They send out this massive amount of money, and they have large program deliveries which I don't think suit the particular needs of children in the north or in urban areas or from new cultures. All of these stressful conditions are all titled as one thing. Change is the greatest stressor in anyone's life—older people wondering where all these changes are coming so quickly. But I'd say that committee, to me, is kind of the fulcrum of the whole thing. If we don't get the social interaction in our society for the young—and even to that extent the very old. The aging population is another absolutely challenging condition for whomever forms government, and I'm sure it will be Tim Hudak shortly. All I'm saying is that whoever is going to be in government is still going to have the same challenges.

The evidence here of these House leaders working together—and their leaders, whether it's Ms. Horwath, the Premier or Tim Hudak. I believe the leadership that's needed here is to have the courage to first clean the deck of some of these administrivia bills and get on with jobs and the economy. For heaven's sake, we have proven, Madam Speaker, in the discussion I've had here this afternoon—with myself, actually—that if you get the economy right, you get the society right. If you get the economy wrong, you get the economy wrong and the quality of life for people just falls down. Think of the families in Michigan and Detroit that don't know what to do. Barack Obama has got the United States shut down now because they can't agree on things.

Our leader has put it all on the table. Let's get on. We've got 14 discussion papers that have been put out there. Yes, there's controversial stuff, but look, our real job here collectively—and individually, I should say—is this. I listened to our friend earlier, the Minister of Transportation. I had the privilege of interrupting him for a while today and talking to him on 407. But our real, fundamental issue here is about making difficult decisions. If it just came down to cutting ribbons and giving out cheques, I believe we should be here for a month a year.

*Interjections.*

1720

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Well, look, I've learned from my mistakes—

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** In many respects.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** —in many respects, but I'll just leave it at this: We're here to make the difficult decisions. I've learned after 18 years here and about 12 years municipally that there really is no perfect answer. It's that clear.

So let's find the best solutions to the complex problems, and the rest will come easy. I think the most important thing is investing in our youth; some of that is education. We have an education bill put up by Lisa MacLeod that I think is fundamental. It puts seniority ahead of quality. You're going to hire a teacher. Do you want to hire by seniority or quality?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** That's the opposite. Job quality: They're putting quality—

**Mr. John O'Toole:** No, no, she is. Her bill is putting quality ahead of seniority. The government is the one; that's what I'm saying.

To the audience here, I was talking about how the Liberals made a deal with the teacher unions, and in it they said—they agreed with the unions. Okay, let's put it where it is. What that said is, you don't have to hire a quality teacher, you have to hire the senior teacher. That's ridiculous. In education, innovation, research—Glen Murray would probably be a decent teacher. He's full of new ideas.

I'm not sure exactly how I have to keep it going, but I've enjoyed the opportunity to address this programming motion that was put forward by our House leader, Jim Wilson, and his assistant Steve Clark.



**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm his assistant.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Well, he's the deputy. They work as a team—let's put it that way—and I'd say a very strong team. A member of the team on the other side would be Mr. Milloy, who's their House leader, and the NDP's is Mr. Bisson.

They have a problem with one little piece. Look, nothing is perfect. You've got 90% of the stake, so let's cut to the chase here. The House leader of the Liberals is going to call the question of the vote, I hope, or somebody is, certainly. If we could move on—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Hon. John Milloy:** It's a pleasure to stand here this afternoon and speak to the debate that's happening right now on the subamendment to this programming motion. I really want to put a few items on the record as to what this is and to explain the reason why you haven't seen a lot of government members stand up and speak about this motion. That's because, as the name would suggest, it's programming; it's a scheduling motion. Contained within it are—

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Pretty straightforward.

**Hon. John Milloy:** As my friend the Minister of Rural Affairs says, it's pretty straightforward.

Contained within it are eight bills, as well as the terms of establishing a very important committee of this Legislature for developmental services. What it does—and I've had to explain this to some members of the media. It doesn't, in fact, pass judgement on any of these bills or on this committee. It doesn't commit the House to anything except to consider them in a reasonable amount of time. I want to stress the word "consider" within here, and I think this is an important point to make, because we've heard from some of the opposition; the New Democrats have talked about ramming through legislation. Nothing is being rammed through here. We are taking a number of pieces of legislation and the terms of reference for a committee and we are asking the Legislature to consider it in a reasonable amount of time, to hold votes where appropriate, to hold committee hearings where it fits into the plan that has been outlined in terms of the progress of the bill, to look at things like amendments, to call witnesses, again, if appropriate, and to report back to the House for further debate and votes.

Why do we need such a scheduling motion? It's because this minority Parliament—I'll be very candid here—has not been working as smoothly as it could. We have seen instances of bills that, ironically, all parties have agreed on that have gone for many, many hours of debate.

The other week, we had a first reading vote on a private member's bill, something which to someone outside Parliament may appear a bit arcane, but it goes against the tradition of Parliament, which says that if a member wants to bring forward a bill, the Legislature or the Parliament will consider it at first reading and then debate, discussion and votes will happen at second reading and beyond.

What this does, from a government's point of view, is it gives us a bit of an insurance policy which says that these items which are important items for this Legislature will be dealt with in a timely fashion, they will be dealt with in an appropriate fashion and they will be able to be considered and voted upon, and not be subject to some of the game-playing that perhaps we've seen in the past.

Madam Speaker, as I said, there are eight bills that are before us. There's also the outline of a very important committee of this Legislature to deal with developmental services—and just a minute or two on that. A number of years ago, I think members may be aware there was a very, very successful formation of a committee here in the Legislature which looked at the issue of mental health. Members from all sides of the House came together, put partisan differences aside and came back with some very valuable advice, and we look for the same in developmental services. That's the one piece that's outside of the bills; the other are eight bills that we look for timely consideration.

As I say, there's not a lot to discuss. That's why you haven't seen Liberals up. This is an administrative or a programming motion. That's why it has been brought forward today.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Pursuant to standing order 47(c), I am required to interrupt the proceedings and announce that there has been more than six and a half hours of debate on this motion. This debate will, therefore, be deemed adjourned, unless the government House leader specifies otherwise.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Just to confirm, Madam Speaker: No further debate.

*Debate deemed adjourned.*

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made to the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business such that Mr. Hardeman assumes ballot item number 53 and Ms. Scott assumes ballot item number 58.

## WASTE REDUCTION ACT, 2013

### LOI DE 2013 SUR LA RÉDUCTION DES DÉCHETS

Resuming the debate adjourned on September 24, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 91, An Act to establish a new regime for the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste and to repeal the Waste Diversion Act, 2002 / Projet de loi 91, Loi créant un nouveau cadre pour la réduction, la réutilisation et le recyclage des déchets et abrogeant la Loi de 2002 sur le réacheminement des déchets.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I'm pleased to resume my remarks from September 24 on Bill 91, the Waste Reduction Act. I'm pleased that the Minister of the Environment is here to take this in, as I did his remarks. I know he'll be interested to hear my 38 minutes that I have remaining—37 minutes on the bill.

I want to pick up where I left off talking really about the Liberals' abysmal record on waste reduction in the province—in fact, a record that has left our waste diversion rate parked at just 23% for 10 long years, a record that has let recycling in the institutional, industrial and commercial sectors decline from 19% to 12% since the Liberals took office, and a record that has seen Ontario consumers footing the bill for hundreds of millions of dollars in eco taxes for little to no results. This is a record that is unacceptable and a record that only a Liberal government could achieve.

It's not hard to see how this sorry state of affairs happened. While other provinces were working on developing effective environmental policy, the Liberals were busy spending all of their time constructing eco tax schemes with their corporate buddies. In 2008, we got eco taxes on paint, batteries, oil filters, antifreeze and containers under the Liberals' Orange Drop program. In 2009, we got eco taxes on car, truck and off-the-road tires under the Liberals' Used Tires Program. In 2009, we also got eco taxes on iPods, TVs, computers, cellphones and every other electronic device imaginable under the Liberals' E-waste program. What has the result been? I'll tell you, Speaker. It's been hundreds of millions of dollars in costs to Ontario consumers every year. In fact, in 2012 the Orange Drop program cost Ontarians nearly \$60 million, the Used Tires Program cost about \$70 million, and the E-waste program cost roughly \$85 million. Speaker, I just want to make sure that everyone is listening, because that's a grand total of \$215 million in eco taxes every year. I hope we can all agree that forcing Ontario consumers to spend nearly a quarter of a billion dollars for little to no results is totally unacceptable.

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I know what almost every Liberal colleague of mine will say. They'll claim that a \$40 tax on a TV here or a \$15 tax on a tire there really isn't that much. Well, what my honourable colleagues don't seem to understand is that this tax-and-spend mentality shows just how out of touch they are with the needs of middle-class and lower-income families here in Ontario. Maybe that extra few dollars in taxes on a can of paint or on a new tablet is not a big deal to you, but it is to families struggling to make ends meet, families feeling the effect of rising costs for hydro and groceries, in addition to their growing tax burden, which includes income tax, the health tax, the fuel tax, the HST, as well as various other taxes on hydro and, of course, eco taxes.

You would think that the Liberal government would be willing to give Ontarians a break or that they would at least tire from devising so many new tax schemes, but after 10 years of reckless overspending and wasteful mismanagement of tax dollars, the Liberal government

still seems all too eager to grab an opportunity to raise taxes, and eco taxes are a case in point.

In the first part of my speech, I outlined that the environment minister's claims that his government doesn't get a cent of eco tax revenue are patently false. The Liberals have received more than \$100 million in hidden taxes embedded into eco taxes. The way it works is, the Liberals include a 13% HST charge into an eco tax, which they then again tax with HST. In other words, the Liberals have been forcing Ontarians to pay a tax on a tax that includes a hidden tax. Clearly, the Liberals' eco tax schemes were never about the environment; they were always about the money.

I had hoped that the Liberals would have moved to solve this problem, but instead they have tabled Bill 91, which does nothing at all to address double HST taxation. This oversight or omission will simply continue the Liberal record of failure on this file. What's more disappointing about the Liberal record, though, is that they have expended all of their time and energy on their eco tax schemes while ignoring the rest of the waste stream.

I would like to ask the members opposite if they know how much of the waste stream the Liberals' eco tax programs actually cover. Are there any guesses here? I know the minister will want to jump up and answer, and I know he may not actually believe this answer. It's actually just 3%. That's right, Speaker; 3%. The Liberals have spent five years ignoring the big picture and forcing Ontario consumers to hand over hundreds of millions of dollars just for 3% of the waste stream. Talk about a missed opportunity. We could have been taking action to divert more waste from the ICI sector, which accounts for 60% of the waste stream, or we could have been doing more to divert construction and demolition waste, which accounts for roughly a million tonnes every year, or we could have been developing a strong program to deal with organics, which account for 30% of the waste stream. But no; the Liberals chose to neglect all three of these areas and instead waste five years nickel-and-diming Ontarians for 3% of the waste stream.

What has the result been?

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Glen, Statistics Canada released its most recent survey data this year, and I know you'll be interested. It found that Ontario's waste diversion rate still—let me repeat that: still—hasn't moved from 23%. So we can't afford to let this Liberal failure continue.

I'd like to remind members opposite that the lifespan for Ontario's 32 large landfills is likely just another two decades. If we continue to throw out three quarters of our waste, we can expect to have a crisis in the very near future. Then there's the additional problem of relying on landfills in the United States to take nearly one third, in fact, of Ontario's waste. Could you imagine if the Americans closed the border? We'd have garbage piling up on the streets within just a few weeks.

We clearly can't afford to sit on the sidelines. We must confront the challenges we face, and we must be good stewards of the environment. Unfortunately,



though, Bill 91 does not provide Ontario with a plan that can pull us out of the last 10 years of Liberal failure. It's simply not enough for the government to set a lofty goal of achieving 60% waste diversion and then hope everything works itself out, like the Liberals did in 2008. We all know that the Liberals' do-nothing strategy hasn't worked yet and won't work in the future.

We are seeing too much of the province's waste go to landfills. In fact, we produce 12.5 million tonnes of waste a year. We ship more than four million tonnes to the United States, and we put nearly six million tonnes of that waste in the ground right here in Ontario. Not only is this unsustainable for our environment, but it also is an enormous loss of economic opportunity to create and retain jobs here in Ontario.

Just think of all the valuable materials like glass, plastics and metals that are being thrown into the trash can and sent off to the dump. We should start to view these materials not as waste but as valuable resources that we should recover and recycle into new products. Doing so would create plenty of new good-paying jobs in our province, true green jobs. Consider that for every thousand tonnes of waste recycled, roughly seven new jobs are created. Do you know how many jobs are created landfilling that much waste? Less than one. Those figures should give any policy-maker all the incentive in the world to act, especially in a province where more than half a million men and women wake up each and every day without a job.

Clearly, we need bold reform, not more excuses and haphazard policies that perpetuate the Liberal record of failure. That's why, one year ago, the Ontario PC caucus announced our plan to make Ontario a leader on the environment once again. To do so, we would introduce reforms that would protect consumers, improve our environment, provide greater accountability and oversight, inject competition into the recycling marketplace, creating good-paying jobs and ultimately leading to higher rates of waste diversion.

We would start our reforms by scrapping each and every one of the Liberals' eco tax programs. That means the Orange Drop, E-waste and used tire programs would be all gone. We do not believe that the government should hand over monopoly control of an entire market to a private sector organization, and we do not believe that the government should impose taxes on Ontarians through a labyrinth of bureaucracy and then claim it had nothing to do with it. As the Ontario PC caucus has pointed out numerous times in this House, the environment minister and his sidekick, Waste Diversion Ontario, sign off on each and every eco tax that consumers are in fact forced to pay. So I think it's somewhat disappointing and insulting that the Liberals actually believe that if they make the bureaucracy complicated enough, they can always deny they had—they actually weren't a part of it.

Now, we obviously all want to keep electronics, tires, paint cans and batteries out of landfills. As we all know, those materials contain chemicals that harm our environment. But we in the Ontario PC caucus have a much

more intelligent way dealing with these materials which, in fact, I laid out last November. Rather than create complicated bureaucracy and massive new costs for consumers, we would simply create the right conditions for economic growth. Under our plan, that means the Ministry of the Environment would set measurable and achievable recycling targets for manufacturers and importers of electronics, tires and household hazardous materials. The ministry would then set environmental standards to ensure that these materials are actually recycled and are not sent overseas in a shipping container or dumped in a landfill. The ministry would then monitor outcomes to ensure that targets are being met. If anyone breaks any of these standards set by the government, it would then be the responsibility of the environment ministry to enforce the rules.

In short, we believe that government should set measurable, achievable targets, establish environmental standards, monitor those outcomes and enforce the rules—that is it.

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Under this framework, manufacturers and importers, which I refer to as producers, would no longer be hampered by Liberal regulations mandating that they must join and pay fees to Stewardship Ontario, Ontario Electronic Stewardship or Ontario Tire Stewardship. They would be free to determine how to achieve recycling targets either on their own or through a collaborative effort. Their operations would not be governed under prescriptive Liberal regulations; they would be governed under the same rules that the rest of the free market must adhere to: the Canadian Competition Act.

Our plan would also open up the marketplace for recycling companies by allowing producers to work with any waste hauler or processor that meets Ontario's environmental standards.

But, clearly, we need to do more. As I stated before, these materials only account for 3% of the waste stream. That's why we stated that we would work with businesses to set measurable and achievable targets for certain materials used in factories, apartment buildings and shopping malls. We know we need to move in this direction because the ICI sector is Ontario's largest source of waste.

One area we could tackle first is, in fact, the construction and demolition area. Scrap metals like aluminum, copper and steel are valuable materials that should be recovered and recycled into new products. Retrieving these materials creates jobs in collection, hauling, processing and manufacturing.

But to create these jobs, we need the right plan. That plan is one that we put forward as the Ontario PC caucus last fall. Our plan would create the economic growth our province needs by setting the right conditions for the free market to thrive and by putting government back into its proper role as a tough regulator. We don't need a useless agency to do the government's job. Our leader is a fan of Milton Friedman, who pointed out many, many years ago, "The existence of a free market does not of course

eliminate the need for government. On the contrary, government is essential both as a forum for determining the 'rule of the game' and as an umpire to interpret and enforce the rules decided on." We agree with that.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** That's Ted Cruz.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** That's Milton Friedman, by the way.

That's why we have called on the government to eliminate Waste Diversion Ontario and bring back all regulatory authority into the Ministry of the Environment, where it truly belongs. Far too often we've seen the government slough off its responsibility to unaccountable arms-length bodies, like Ornge ambulance or eHealth, which mismanaged the taxpayers' money. Waste Diversion Ontario has proven to be among the same cast of characters, failing to fulfill its mandate on all fronts.

Instead of getting rid of WDO, the Liberals want to give it more powers and more money. Speaker, I know you can agree that when an employee has failed to do his job, you don't hand him a promotion or give him a raise; you hand him a pink slip and show him the door. I don't know if that's quite a quote that Jack Layton said, but it was close, and I liked that one, so I felt I needed to use that again.

Deep down I know, and I'm sure the minister knows, you should not promote someone who has failed on the job. I know he knows that. I'm pretty sure that's why he walks around telling people that he's getting rid of Waste Diversion Ontario. But, Speaker, let me assure you, nothing could be further from the truth.

I would like to read a few sections of Bill 91 to demonstrate my point. First, section 5 states, "Waste Diversion Ontario ... is continued ... under the name of Waste Reduction Authority." I would forgive you if you thought that changing this agency's name would make a difference. So let me continue to make my case.

Section 8(14), prescribes that the WDO board continues as members of the board of directors of the authority. Okay. So far, we have the same agency with the same board but with just a different name. But guess who else gets to stick around? The chair. Section 8(15) states: "The chair ... of Waste Diversion Ontario ... continues as chair of the board of directors of the authority."

I suppose one could attempt to make the argument that the same agency with the same board with the same chair, albeit with a new name, would at least be, in some sense, different. But then there's section 10(7), which states: "The operating agreement between the minister and Waste Diversion Ontario that is in force ... continues in force as the operating agreement between the minister and the authority." That means that the rules governing WDO are the same.

Let's recap. It is the same agency with the same board, with the same chair, with the same rules, but a different name. Clearly, Bill 91 itself establishes the case that there is not a new agency, as the Liberals claim. There is the same agency with some changes. To make a claim to the contrary is not only disingenuous, but also insulting to

the intelligence of the hard-working men and women of this province of Ontario.

The really detrimental changes the Liberals have made are by handing over massive new regulatory taxation and enforcement powers to WDO, which I will call the "authority" after establishing my former case. I would now like to walk through all the areas of concern we have with the authority, starting with the massive new regulatory powers the Liberals want to give it.

First, section 27 calls for the appointment of a registrar, or what I like to call a "waste czar." Under section 28, this waste czar would then have the power to appoint deputies to help with registering all producers in the province. The information collected would then be entered into a government database or a registry and stored with the authority.

Forgive me for digressing for one moment, but I think this point is crucial: Bill 91 doesn't even define what a "producer" is. That definition, of course, like every other important decision, is left for regulation. So many businesses are not sure if they'll have the waste czar or his deputies come knocking on their door. We just don't know, and of course the Liberals won't tell us.

But what they have told us is that the authority will have taxation powers. It seems as though the first detail a Liberal always figures out is how to get more money. Never mind basic definitions; they say, "We're trying to create a new taxation scheme over here."

Speaker, if you can believe it, under section 22, the authority, just like the College of Trades, will be able to impose a new—let me stress, a new—tax on business. This tax, of course, would then be passed on to you and me and all the rest of the consumers because, as with every other Liberal program, Ontarians, of course, are always left to foot the bill.

This short-sighted proposal is unacceptable to the Ontario PC caucus. Our party has been calling on the Liberals for years to scrap eco taxes here in Ontario, but instead of working with our party, the Liberals chose to table a bill that not only keeps every single eco tax program they've ever created, but actually creates new tax. This violates a key demand of our party and is a pivotal reason why we cannot support Bill 91.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** There it is: You're just being negative.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Come on, now.

Another reason for our opposition—and I'll outline this; I'm hoping he's continuing to listen here—is the Liberals' insistence on creating more senseless bureaucracy, like the enforcement branch of the authority. To make sure all producers are paying taxes, section 29 of Bill 91 allows the waste czar to appoint inspectors, or what I like to call "waste cops." These waste cops will be tasked with fanning out across the province to snoop through garbage, looking for violators and finding any business not paying the new Liberal tax.

I have two major problems with this new enforcement branch. First, it unnecessarily duplicates an existing government department. The Ministry of the Environment



already has enforcement officers, and they would be more than able to enforce any regulation that the government creates. Clearly, we do not need to reinvent the wheel, especially when the Liberals need to raise millions in new taxes to do so.

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Second, this excessive enforcement branch is disrespectful to the hard-working businessmen and women who want to do the right thing and protect our environment. We should be working with these professionals as partners; we shouldn't be treating them like an unruly mob. But that's exactly what the Liberals are doing in this area with the establishment of the authority's waste tribunal or, more appropriately, a kangaroo court. Of course, this tribunal, just like the waste czar's administration and enforcement branch, comes with no price tag attached to it. Ontario consumers are just being asked to pick up the tab without being given an indication of the costs. Well, that's not good enough. They deserve to know, especially when the system the government is creating will rack up millions of dollars in new costs as all the parties endlessly fight legal battles with one another.

Here's where we get to the heart of the matter: the blue box. Right now, under the Waste Diversion Act, municipalities and producers split the cost of the blue box program 50-50. After tabling Bill 91, the Liberals claimed that they would like to transition the blue box into individual producer responsibility, but again, the talking point doesn't match the actual content of their bill. If producers were truly moving to IPR, they would not only assume all of the costs, they would also get to manage the materials.

But the Liberals have done the complete opposite. Even though the minister claimed last week that his plan doesn't involve producers signing a blank cheque, that's exactly what Bill 91 does in its current form. Under section 7(c)—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Listen—the authority has the power “to establish a compensation formula for every designated waste” that a municipality has registered for. That means if a municipality wants to be compensated for blue box materials or any other material, for that matter, the authority can force a funding formula on both producers and municipalities.

This specific provision is dealt with in section 44(5), which states if there is no financial agreement between producers and municipalities, “the amount shall be determined in accordance with the compensation formula established by the authority....” This is really the most disappointing feature of this poorly drafted bill. It focuses more on perpetrating a fight between municipalities and businesses over money than setting priorities and reducing the amount of waste that's going into our landfills.

We shouldn't be drawing lines in the sand, ready to fight one another over every last dollar. We should be working together to clean up our environment and build

on the success of the blue box program. But to do that, we need to keep costs under control. In just six years, costs for the blue box program have jumped to \$315 million a year, up from \$252 million annually. We all know we can't sustain this forever, so we need to find some common ground between producers and municipalities. But to get there, we'll have to give and take a little.

That starts with respecting the role of municipalities in providing collection services to their residents, and it also means respecting the view of producers who are being asked to carry the full financial burden. It's only fair that if they are paying the full cost, they should own the materials from that transaction. So if any type of reform moves forward, I think it's quite clear that we will need to revisit regulation 101.

But let me stress, this reform cannot happen under Bill 91. The way the Liberals have set up the system, it is doomed to failure and cannot and will not be supported by the Ontario PC caucus.

Like I said earlier, the only regulatory approach we support is the one that we outlined last year. That means there should be no Waste Reduction Authority; there should be just the ministry. The ministry should set targets, establish standards, monitor those outcomes and enforce the rules. These powers should not be left to an unaccountable government agency.

The authority, as laid out in the bill, is disconnected from Parliament, not subject to the freedom-of-information act, and can only be reviewed by the Auditor General if the minister feels it's necessary.

We all know that the overlap and duplication between WDO and the ministry has gotten so bad over the years that the Liberal government itself has even admitted in its own report that it's impossible to “effectively” maintain accountability. Speaker, we all agree. That's why we want to see all sections dealing with the authority removed from the act. There are plenty of people who agree with our position, including the Canadian Environmental Law Association.

I would briefly like to share what CELA lawyer Richard Lindgren had to say on the matter. He said that CELA wants to ensure that enforcement and compliance of the industry remain in the ministry's hands because “enforcement of environmental standards is a core government function.” We agree with that too.

Let me tell you what isn't a core government function: interference in the marketplace. Our party was very clear that under our plan we would set recycling targets and then give producers the freedom to meet those targets either on their own or in a collaborative effort with other businesses. The only stipulation would be that they would have to meet the province's environmental standards and follow federal competition laws. Interestingly, this same position was supported by the majority of stakeholders at the Environmental Commissioner's round-table event even after I announced the PC plan for reform last November.

Instead of listening to our sound proposal, the Liberals have created yet another maze of bureaucracy that has

confused the entire business community. Rather than allowing businesses to work together in partnership, like they do everywhere else in the marketplace, the Liberals have created a convoluted registration process for intermediaries. An intermediary, under section 40 of the bill, is essentially an industry funding organization, or IFO, under the Waste Diversion Act. Similar to IFOs, an intermediary would be responsible for adhering to the regulations established under the proposed act.

We have uncovered yet another inconsistency in what the Liberals claim and what the actual contents of the bill say. I know the environment minister enjoys telling people that his bill is based on individual producer responsibility, but the facts are, he has created a system that does not hold the individual producer responsible. It holds collectives responsible. One really needs to question the minister's reasons for adding this provision to the bill. Is it because he has no faith in the free market, or is he just trying to continue the very same monopoly organizations the Liberal government created, including OES and OTS, along with the Liberal eco tax empire?

Let's take a look at the facts. Bill 91 continues every single eco tax program ever created by this Liberal government. I will grant the Liberals this: They did put a provision in the bill to give the minister the option of winding down these programs, but, of course, that's also left to regulation. All we're left with, again, is another Liberal claim that maybe one day five years from now the Liberal government might want to wind down eco taxes. But I want you all to ask yourselves: When has a Liberal ever made a promise to abolish a tax and actually followed through with it? I think you would be safe to say, "Never."

Still, even though Bill 91 does not get rid of eco taxes, that fact didn't stop the Liberals from claiming it did. In fact, the day the minister announced the bill, he huffed and puffed in front of the media that he was getting rid of eco taxes. Too bad for him that the entire Queen's Park press gallery does not believe what he has to say anymore. They immediately called him out—his false statements—and his entire press conference went sideways.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** I ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Withdrawn.

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*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Seeing the time, pursuant to standing order 38, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made.

## ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

### TOURISM

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Kenora–Rainy River has given notice of dissatisfaction with an answer to a question given on

September 24 by the Minister of Natural Resources. I'll wait for a moment to allow people to leave the chamber. I've done this before.

The member has up to five minutes to debate the matter, and the parliamentary assistant may reply for up to five minutes.

The member for Kenora–Rainy River.

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** Thank you, Speaker. Before I begin, I would like to take a moment to say thank you to a fellow member. As you are aware, last week the member from Niagara Falls, Mr. Kim Craitor, announced his resignation. Despite being on the other side of the House, Mr. Craitor openly questioned this government's policy when it came to tourism. Rather than defend poor policy, Mr. Craitor stood up for what's right, and I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank him for his efforts. After all, it is this government's collective failed policies pertaining to northwestern Ontario that bring us here this evening.

Last week, I asked the Minister of Natural Resources to explain why his government ignored the northwest when it issued its joint fall-colours, parks and tourism promotion. At that time, I did not receive a satisfactory answer.

Speaker, this promotion encourages individuals to travel to Ontario's parks, to take scenic drives and enjoy nature in this province, but it comes at a time when most of the parks in my region have closed. Of the 10 scenic drives proposed by this campaign, zero are in the northwest, and the travel information centres people are encouraged to visit have been shut down by this government, as have many of the parks we once enjoyed for recreation, camping and to attract tourists.

Rather than explain his decision, last week the minister stated that the parks weren't shut down, they just haven't reopened, while his ministry staff takes the position that even though the parks are boarded up with "Closed" signs hanging from the chains blocking their driveways, people are still free to visit them. How many people do you know who would park on a narrow shoulder along a busy highway to make their way around chained gates and assume that they are welcome? My guess is few, if any.

It is this type of language that the minister and his staff use that has people across the northwest feeling ignored and cynical. It is just too ridiculous to be taken seriously. "Closed" is not "Open" and chains do not mean that you are welcome. I suppose next, you'll probably try to tell us that no northwest content in the Ministry of Tourism's travel app means we're a blank canvas to explore. "Ontario: Yours to discover"—provided you can squeeze through the fence posts or scale a 10-foot chain-link fence.

This promotion comes at a time when we in the northwest have disproportionately borne the brunt of cuts by this government. Rather than being treated as equal partners, we're being dictated to like a colonial province. This government could be forgiven if it was a one-off exclusion, but it is not. Whether it is the MNR's closure



of the parks, or the Ministry of Tourism's closure of our travel information centres, or the MTO's decision to allow Travel Manitoba billboards to be erected along our own highways while our own industry struggles, this Liberal government has shown nothing but contempt and indignation for the hard-working families across the northwest.

Families that rely on tourism, rely on our natural resources and rely on the MNR for jobs, resource management and safety from wild animals are seeing these jobs disappear, our industries gutted and our programs decimated only to be told "Trust us" by a government that has done absolutely nothing to earn it.

Speaker, we are not a colony. We have not been vanquished or defeated, despite this government's best efforts. We in the northwest even have two members who sit around the Liberal caucus table. Where are their voices?

I ask again: When this campaign was created, were people living in the northwest even considered? Can this government point to a single strategy for our tourism industry that was a success?

I look forward to the parliamentary assistant's response.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Ottawa South.

**Mr. John Fraser:** Thank you to the member from Kenora–Rainy River. It's my first late show, and I'm pleased to be able to respond to your question.

Firstly, I wanted to speak to the fall-colours campaign which you referenced in your remarks. It's important to note that two of the five parks mentioned in the release are in the north. One is Pigeon River at Finger Point and the other is the lookout at Edmund Fitzgerald Trail and the campground or beach at Pancake Bay.

As well, the release gives a link to the full fall-colours report, which has many northern parks listed, including French River, Lake Superior, Pancake Bay, Pigeon River, Quetico, Wabakimi and Woodland Caribou.

Last fall, there were changes to the operating status of 10 parks as part of the Ministry of Natural Resources' transformation plan. These changes focused on achieving financial sustainability, making the ministry more modern and efficient, and contributing to the government's commitment to balance the provincial budget.

Subsequent to that announcement, the ministry was able to work collaboratively with the town of Hearst, the township of Moonbeam and the city of Timmins to reach a two-year pilot agreement to operate Fushimi Lake, René Brunelle and Ivanhoe Lake Provincial Parks. These unique two-year pilots allow the parks to operate while still achieving the savings we committed to in the ministry's transformation plan, and helping to reduce the government's deficit.

We were also able to work with the city of Elliot Lake and local First Nations to develop a pilot that will see the city operate Mississagi Provincial Park, with the goal of increasing revenue and visitation rates.

As the minister referred to in his earlier answer, the ministry continues to be open to partnership options with interested parties, where a solid business case can support having these kinds of pilots.

Ontario has one of the biggest and best park systems in the world. There are more than 330 provincial parks with more than 100 visitor facilities. Ontario Parks also employs 1,600 students each summer and manages one of the most diverse portfolios in all of North America.

In terms of a partnership between the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of Tourism has identified 13 tourism regions, the north being one of them. Since 2003, we have made significant investments in the north: over \$20 million since 2010 to the regional tourism organization in region 13; approximately \$5 million annually since 2003 for the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corp.'s northern Ontario budget; and over \$7 million since 2007 to support 160 festivals and events in northern Ontario through Celebrate Ontario.

These investments have helped northern Ontario develop a unique tourism product. We expect, under the new regional structure, that northern Ontario will continue to work collaboratively to build and promote their tourism experiences.

Madam Speaker, our government continues to support tourism in the north, and I would like to thank the member from Kenora–Rainy River for her question and the opportunity to respond to it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. The time has passed.

This House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow.

*The House adjourned at 1808.*

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
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Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
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Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	



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Holyday, Douglas C. (PC)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
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Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
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Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
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Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
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Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
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Vacant	Niagara Falls	



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Paul Miller  
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## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Wednesday 2 October 2013

Mercredi 2 octobre 2013



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 2 October 2013

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 2 octobre 2013

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

## WEARING OF PINS

**Hon. David Zimmer:** Mr. Speaker, a point of order?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** A point of order from the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent that all members of the Legislature be permitted to wear pins in recognition of the efforts to end violence against aboriginal women and girls.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs is seeking unanimous consent to wear pins representing the fight against violence against aboriginal women and children. Agreed? Agreed. We have agreement.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** Thank you, Speaker.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Orders of the day.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Good morning, Speaker, on this beautiful fall morning when it's Kingston day at Queen's Park. The government is pleased to call government order G105.

## SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES ACT, 2013

### LOI DE 2013 VISANT À SOUTENIR LES PETITES ENTREPRISES

Mr. Leal, on behalf of Mr. Sousa, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 105, An Act to amend the Employer Health Tax Act / Projet de loi 105, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'impôt-santé des employeurs.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further debate?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to let you know, and the viewing audience in Peterborough, Ontario, this morning that I will be sharing my time with the distinguished member from Vaughan, who has a very long and distinguished career in the small business sector in the province of Ontario, particularly in the area of Vaughan. I know he will be talking about that today.

At the onset, of us who have had the opportunity to visit wonderful Kingston, Ontario, know that is the

centre of many small businesses. We'll join with the Attorney General later today in rooms 228 and 230 to see everything that Kingston has to offer. I suspect His Worship Mayor Gerretsen will be there too. We're looking forward to that wonderful hospitality that only Kingston can provide for us today.

I'm pleased to spend a few minutes this morning to talk about Bill 105. You know, prior to my election to the Ontario Legislature exactly 10 years ago today, I was employed in a small business in Peterborough called the Coyle Packaging Group.

They're a very successful small business. They have—  
**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It's more successful since you came here.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Well, I was just going to get to that. It's interesting: I think sales have grown at least 75% since I left a decade ago. Thank you so much to my good friend the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for pointing out that historical fact.

I just want to recognize the Coyle Packaging Group. The president is Jim Coyle. Along with his two brothers, Bill and John, he has been running the businesses they inherited from their father, the late Gord Coyle, a decade or so ago—very successful. Particularly, in Jim's case, I want to acknowledge his wife, Wendy, who is now a cancer survivor and went through a very, very difficult time for the last 12 months. Wendy is now doing very, very well and is on the road to full recovery.

They are an example of a very successful small business in the packaging group. They're going to directly benefit from the 2013 budget changes in the employer health tax that are targeted, helping more than 60,000 Ontario small businesses to promote jobs and growth. These reforms—these important reforms—are part of our government's ongoing work to make Ontario the most attractive place to do business in North America, and all of us on all sides of the House share that.

Just to give you a couple of quick highlights before I turn it over to my colleague the member from Vaughan, businesses with annual payrolls under \$5 million will be exempt from paying the EHT on the first \$450,000 of their payroll. I know that will be extremely helpful. I'm thinking about Home Hardware on Lansdowne Street West in Peterborough. They will be recipients. This will be able to help them.

I know that Stuart Harrison, the general manager of the Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce, has advocated for years that we change the benchmark level for the EHT for small businesses. So, Stuart, if you're watching out there in Peterborough this morning, this



one's to you, and thank you for your great advocacy work to make this a reality.

I'd also like to add that this exemption will be indexed to inflation every five years, ensuring that small businesses see a consistent reduction in their taxes—very important.

With those few introductory remarks, it's my pleasure to turn it over to my colleague the member from Vaughan.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** I want to begin by thanking the member from Peterborough and Minister of Rural Affairs for those introductory comments regarding Bill 105. Here we are at second reading of this particular piece of legislation supporting small businesses, the Supporting Small Businesses Act, 2013, which was highlighted as one of many outstanding measures in Ontario budget 2013.

I want to commend the member from Peterborough for those introductory comments, as he explained, I think, very eloquently, his own experiences, before arriving in this particular chamber 10 years ago this very day, working with small business in his community prior to his arrival here in the Legislature, but also the work he's done—the significant and outstanding work this particular member, like many members here on this side of the House have done over the last 10 years, in some cases, and in shorter terms for those who arrived after 2003—to help support small business here in the province of Ontario. So thank you to the member from Peterborough for those introductory comments and for all of his great work here in this House.

There are many topics on which I'd like to touch today with respect to this particular bill, but the member from Peterborough did start his comments by talking a little bit about the fact that this is his 10th anniversary, or at least the 10th anniversary of his first election to the House back on October 2, 2003. I know there are a number of other members on this side of the House for whom this is also a 10th anniversary. I think it's really important, with respect to the debates we've had in this place since budget 2013 around some of the other bills that have arisen because of the budget.

For example, the legislation regarding the Financial Accountability Officer and some of the other stuff we've discussed here on this floor since budget 2013—when I've had the privilege to stand and talk about many of these pieces of legislation, I've often referred to them as part of the ongoing or evolutionary process, and I think that it's timely. It's more than just coincidence that here we are on the 10th anniversary of the first election of the Ontario Liberal Party, or at least the return of the Ontario Liberal Party to power.

0910

There have been many, many things that have occurred over the last 10 years that speak to the fact that this is a government that has, throughout those 10 years, worked very, very hard to make sure that Ontario's economy remains strong, remains on track, and that has dealt with significant challenges like the 2008 global economic crisis by responding quickly and forcefully to ensure that we are prepared to weather that storm that, frankly,

engulfed many, many other jurisdictions, both national and subnational, around the world. And because of the steps that were taken by this government in the aftermath of what occurred in 2008, and the decisions that have been made since, the Ontario economy remains on track. It remains strong and robust and it continues to grow. Speaker.

Here we are again today talking about this particular bill, this notion of making sure that we work hard to support small businesses, that we continue to support small businesses here in Ontario. This is another example of that evolutionary process. As I said at second or third reading—I don't remember now—of the Financial Accountability Officer legislation, there are many things that occurred over the course of the last 10 years with respect to making sure that our economy remains strong and remains on track. I'll repeat them because I think they bear repeating, and people watching at home and people here in this chamber I think need to recognize that we always need to learn from stuff that has occurred in the past so that we can go forward and chart a course moving forward that is stronger and that provides us with the opportunity to continue to achieve outstanding things.

So as I said at third reading of a previous bill, Speaker, there are a lot of people in Ontario today, maybe some who are watching right now from my community of Vaughan, who wouldn't even know that there was a time in Ontario when a government of the day was able to tell the people, prior to that 2003 election campaign, that the books were balanced, that there was no deficit, that everything was on the up and up and that everything was fine. When we came to power in 2003, we called in a former Auditor General to review the books, and we learned, to our shock and to our dismay and extreme disappointment—I know that was felt by people right across this province. We found that, in fact, it wasn't a balanced budget situation, that there was a hidden deficit of close to \$6 billion, that the former PC government had actually not been completely forthcoming with the people of Ontario. Even though they had been asked repeatedly at the last budget before the 2003 election and throughout the 2003 election, they chose not to be completely forthcoming with the people of Ontario and instead decided to leave that hidden deficit for us to discover and to deal with upon our election in 2003.

We took steps in the aftermath of the 2003 election campaign to pass sweeping, important, groundbreaking legislation that would provide a level of accountability and transparency so that no future government, ours included, could ever enter into an election campaign and pull the wool over the eyes of the people of Ontario. We passed legislation in this House to make sure that the province's books are reviewed before each election campaign going forward to make sure that ruse, that opportunity the PC government of the day took to not be forthcoming with the people of Ontario couldn't occur again. And we've seen in 2007 and in 2011 the opportunity for the Auditor General to review the province's books to make sure the people of Ontario have the whole story.

That kind of financial accountability and transparency has been the hallmark of this Ontario Liberal government for 10 years, and today the bill that we're discussing, Bill 105, is another example of that evolutionary process.

I said at third reading of a previous bill, Speaker, that many people in Ontario wouldn't know that there was a time in this province when, again, a former government, a PC government, was able to spend tens and tens and tens of millions of taxpayers' dollars on what many felt was partisan government advertising. They blurred those lines, Speaker. They did that frequently, not unlike what we see the federal Conservatives doing with the hundreds of millions that they've spent on advertising pushing out their plans. Well, Speaker, many people wouldn't know that there was a time in Ontario when that took place, and it was common. We changed that. We determined that it made the most sense for us to move forward in order to make sure that the people of Ontario had a degree of faith and a degree of confidence that their tax dollars were not being spent on supportive or overly partisan advertising by the government of the day. We took steps to make those changes, and I believe the people of Ontario are all the better for it.

So there are many, many steps that we've taken over the last 10 years as a government to bring that level of fiscal accountability and transparency, and to support Ontario's economy. And here we are today, Speaker. We find ourselves in a situation where, coming out of that 2008 global economic crisis that occurred because of circumstances well beyond any particular province's control, we managed to deal with those here in Ontario by making the right kind of investments in people, the right kind of investments in infrastructure, which we continue to make, and also by working with our small business community to create the kind of climate, the kind of environment, in which small businesses can continue to grow and to thrive and to prosper. The decisions that we made post 2008 continue to this day, and over these last number of months on this side, Premier Wynne and our colleague Ontario Finance Minister Charles Sousa have made decisions going into budget 2013 to make sure that as a government we can continue to keep Ontario's economy on the right track, that we can continue to provide the circumstances, or the environment, which Ontario's small businesses and large businesses can use to leverage so that they can continue to invest.

Again, Speaker, because it does bear repeating, it's important to note that as a government, our priority is that we continue to invest in people, that we continue to invest in crucial infrastructure, and that we continue to do whatever we can to support a dynamic and innovative business climate for the people of Ontario. Those are our priorities, and we see evidence of those priorities in this particular bill, in Bill 105.

I think it's also important to note—I look at my own community with respect to this issue of investing, particularly in infrastructure. I look at Vaughan. Vaughan is not unlike many other municipalities that ring Toronto and, frankly, not unlike many other suburban municipal-

ities right across this province. It's growing very, very quickly—population increases over the last quarter century. I've lived in my community for 25 years, and to have seen the difference in terms of the size and the population shift in growth and the intensity of the development that's taken place in my community it simply breathtaking. Again, it's similar in ridings like Richmond Hill, ridings like Oak Ridges—Markham, ridings that ring other urban centres: Kitchener, London, Ottawa and so on. But when I think of what's taken place over the last 10 years in a community like mine, in a city that now has a population that exceeds 300,000 and continues to grow, I see that the decisions that have been made by the Ontario Liberal government over the last 10 years to invest in that crucial infrastructure have paid significant dividends back to my community and so many others. There are many examples.

Even in the 12 months that I've been on the job representing my community of Vaughan, there have been tremendous examples of our government's commitment to invest in infrastructure. I can think of the fact that in budget 2013 we announced the approval of the nearly seven-kilometre stretch of Highway 427. Highway 427 is serving not only York region and the city of Vaughan but also serving Peel region and the city of Brampton. The 427 extension is roughly to run from Highway 7 currently, where it stops, up to Major Mackenzie Drive, a roughly seven-kilometre stretch. There will be three interchanges. It's a highway, from an economic standpoint, which will help leverage significant investment from small businesses and also medium and large businesses, because that highway extension essentially bisects or cuts through something that's known as the Vaughan enterprise zone. That's roughly 1,200 or 1,300 acres of green-field employment land that has yet to be developed because, frankly, the city, the region, and all of the businesses and land owners in the area have been waiting for the opportunity to see the 427 extension get approved so that in the very near future—hopefully with some hard work and dedication—we can get shovels in the ground, we can get that built and we can unlock all of that economic development potential. The city of Vaughan has estimated that when the Vaughan enterprise zone is fully built out, it will help leverage and create the kind of investment that will produce, directly and indirectly, tens of thousands of new jobs here for the greater Toronto area.

That's one example of the kinds of investments that we've been making in crucial infrastructure. I can think of others in my community: what we've done with respect to the Viva rapid transit system. That services not only Vaughan but also Richmond Hill, Markham and some of the other communities in York region—hundreds of millions of dollars. A recent announcement that the member from Richmond Hill participated in, with the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, regarding some of the work that's taking place, the fantastic new—I guess traditionally we would call them bus stops, but they're so much more in terms of helping to convince



and encourage more and more people in fast-growing areas like Richmond Hill, like Vaughan, like right across the York region, to make the choice to use public transit because it's accessible, it's innovative and it helps move them in a more timely fashion. It's hundreds of millions of dollars invested by this government over 10 years, and we continue to invest.

0920

One of the first announcements that I participated in last fall was an announcement around the widening of Highway 7 in my community to help build in the extra lane to service this Viva bus rapid transit, a nearly \$140-million investment—that I had the privilege of making alongside one of my colleagues back in, I believe, last October. These are the kinds of investments.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'm having trouble hearing the speaker, and all of the noise is coming from his side. If you want to have little discussions, like four different discussions, you might want to go out in the lobby and do it.

Continue.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that. I will do my best to speak even louder, if that helps.

In addition, as I was saying, investments in that crucial infrastructure matters so much, not just to the people of my community, but also to the small businesses. Back on April 10, I believe it was, I had the opportunity to represent our Minister of Health and Long-Term Care by announcing a \$49.7-million planning grant for Vaughan's hospital. That is now planning money that will help the team at Mackenzie Health finish the entire planning process and take us through procurement without requiring additional funds. That is a massive project that is of crucial importance to my community—but not just my community of Vaughan; all of southwest York region. That will help our small business community in York region and beyond continue to lure the kind of investment that we need, because they can sell to their customers and their prospective employees and to suppliers that they are working in an area—that they are providing economic development, that they are hiring people, that they are trying to encourage folks and customers to come and participate with them in that economic exchange that drives our economy forward, by saying, "We have local access to quality health care here in this community."

These are the kinds of decisions that our government has been making over the last 10 years. I think it's important to mark here today, on our 10th anniversary as a government, that we are continuing to move forward with these kinds of investments, investing in people. I think investing in people is something else, when you take a look at the creative way, over the last number of months and years, that we've invested in helping to expand the post-secondary education sector in the province of Ontario.

Creating new apprenticeships: There may be no other issue with respect to PSE that's as important within as-

pects in my community as the fact that we've expanded the apprenticeship system so extensively in the last 10 years. I can think of three or four significant, leading-edge training centres that exist in my community alone, tens and tens of thousands of square feet of training space where young women and men get the opportunity to embark on a career in the skilled trades, because this government has understood from day one that it's important that we invest in giving young people in particular—but not just young people; people who may want to shift at different points in their career as they get a little older—an opportunity to learn a new skill, or acquire their first skill coming out of high school or coming out of university, and establish themselves in a very successful career in the trades. It's one of the reasons that we helped create, working with the industry, working with all industries, working with the community of skilled trade—it's one of the reasons we chose, as a government, to create the College of Trades. It's the first time in Canadian history that a provincial government, to my knowledge, has embarked on providing what I like to call the community of skilled trades with the ability to be self-governing, with the opportunity to be in control of their own affairs.

Frankly, whether it's a trade in the manufacturing sector or the service sector or the motive sector or the construction sector, who knows better than the people in the trades themselves what they need for their future, be it ratio reviews, be it applications and considerations with respect to which trades are voluntary and compulsory, given whether it's dealing with any of those kinds of things that matter to those trades? For far too long in Ontario's history, while many other professions—teachers, nurses, doctors, lawyers and many, many others—had the ability to be self-governing, were empowered and enabled to be self-governing, the community of skilled trades, the roughly 130 or so skilled trades in the province of Ontario, still had to come cap in hand here to the Ontario government to ask for direction and to give their advice in a way that sometimes wasn't completely clear. To have now taken the opportunity to provide those trades with the opportunity to govern themselves, to regulate themselves, is a groundbreaking initiative. It helped to continue to encourage the kinds of investments in people that we've been making over the last number of months and the last 10 years.

When I take a look at the specific bill itself, Bill 105, the notion of supporting small business—it's kind of a well-worn cliché, but I think the reason it is a well-worn cliché is because it is true: Small businesses are in fact the backbone of any particular advanced economy. When you think of who does the work, who takes on the significant risk—I look again at my own community in Vaughan. There are thousands of women and men who have taken it upon themselves to embark on certain, let's call them entrepreneurial adventures, people who have decided that they want to take that risk, to perhaps partner with others, find their own resources, seek out support from financial institutions because they have an idea, because they have an innovative and creative concept,

because they have a degree of drive. Whatever the rationale is, whatever that initial source of inspiration or that initial spark is, Speaker, I have tremendous respect that I know many of us—dare I say, all of us in this chamber have tremendous respect for those individuals who decide that they're going to roll up their sleeves, they're going to take advantage of that initial idea, that initial innovation, that entrepreneurial flair they may have, and start their own small business.

While government can't necessarily at every single step of the way make decisions for small business owners and other business owners, what government can do is take the time and take the energy and have the creativity to provide small business owners and those who aspire to be small business owners—by supporting that dynamic and innovative business climate that I talked about a second ago, Speaker. It is such a crucial thing.

I know there are people who represent different communities here in this chamber—some today like the member from Peterborough, who talked about his experiences, before arriving in this House 10 years ago, working for a small business. I'm sure there are people here who were involved in small businesses—perhaps they ran their small businesses—and they know that it's not always easy to embark, to take that risk, that initial jump, but many of them did it. Many of them succeeded. Many of them did well. Many of them prospered.

I think part of the role of government is to, like I said a second ago, create that environment, create those conditions so that those who decide to take that jump are enabled and helped and supported to do well. So, Speaker, in budget 2013, one of the many, many, many important measures, whether it was relating to auto insurance or relating to investments like the Highway 427 extension for my community or the funding that we set aside for the youth employment strategy, the \$295 million, or the money that was set aside for home care—a number of measures in the budget. But this one, to me, has a particular importance because of that requirement, that responsibility that falls to government to help create that innovative and supportive business climate.

I know the member from Peterborough did refer to this a little bit when he was talking about the bill in his introductory comments. But just so we understand clearly, through this particular act, budget 2013 announced reforms to the employer health tax that are targeted at helping more than 60,000 Ontario small businesses in promoting jobs and growth. That's 60,000 small businesses. But, Speaker, that goes beyond just this concept of a statistic; 60,000 is a big number, but those 60,000 small businesses, in turn, are likely run by members of 60,000 families that want to do well, that don't expect a handout necessarily, don't expect that they're going to have government make all of their decisions for them. But they're 60,000 families working in 60,000 small businesses, or being involved in those small businesses, that simply want the opportunity, that simply want to be able to roll up their sleeves, like I said a second ago, to work hard, to partner with government, to work with

financial institutions, to sell their product, to sell their service, to be innovative, to be creative and to employ tens and tens and tens of thousands more people here in the province of Ontario.

The reforms are part, as I've said earlier, of our government's ongoing commitment to make Ontario the most attractive place to do business here in North America. Speaker, on that note, over the last number of months and years, I know that we've all heard the Minister of Finance and others talk about how Ontario is considered to be a very attractive place for foreign direct investment. For a long time, Ontario was considered, I believe, the second-most popular destination for foreign direct investment across North America. Today, I believe we stand at third.

Speaker, I think, especially when you consider the challenges we've faced, the challenges that our manufacturing sector faced in the wake of that 2008 global economic crisis, the fact that because of the decisions we've made here in this chamber as an Ontario Liberal government, but also because of the resilience of those people who work in small business, those people who are small business owners, because of the resilience and the determination and the drive of the people of Ontario—we actually remain in a very, very strong position, and we are a very attractive place for businesses to work here in North America.

Speaker, in terms of the actual technical aspects of the bill, what this particular act will do is provide the opportunity for businesses with annual payrolls of under \$5 million to be exempt from paying the employer health tax on the first \$450,000 of their payroll each year. That particular exemption will now be indexed to inflation every five years, which will ensure that small businesses see a consistent and ongoing reduction in their taxes.

**0930**

When I think about these measures—and again, I revert back to my own community. I can think of many small business owners with whom I've developed a relationship over the years. Some are friends; some are people in my community. Again, they just want that opportunity. They just want to be enabled and empowered to make the kind of decisions that will not only provide them with some security and provide them with some prosperity for themselves and their families, but will help them employ many, many other women and men and to give many, many other families—to leverage that initial entrepreneurial creativity, to provide support, to provide prosperity and to provide opportunity for thousands of others whom they would indirectly employ as a result of some of these investments.

Not that long ago, I happened to step into a business in Kleinburg, which is perhaps one of the most beautiful parts of my riding of Vaughan. I happened to go into a wonderful little place called Dolcini, which is run by a gentleman named Joseph and his wife. Together, they create some fantastic baked goods that are renowned all around Kleinburg and beyond.

I think of how this kind of measure—and certainly in my community there are lots of opportunities. I think of



St. Phillips Bakery. I think of so many others in Vaughan, not just in that particular sector but in many other sectors, who will be able to take advantage of this opportunity in budget 2013 to continue to grow their businesses, to continue to employ people and to continue to make the kinds of investments. Because we're actually going to be indexing this exemption to inflation every five years, it not only provides them with an ongoing consistent reduction; it provides them with a degree of certainty and stability around this particular aspect of how they operate their businesses because they'll know that for five years it's being indexed to inflation. It's not the kind of stand-alone or one-off decision that's made by a government that has to be revisited every year. Now they have an understanding. They can better plan and make better decisions as a business because they understand that this particular aspect has those five years.

I think it's important to note that this particular new exemption will reduce the cost of hiring and it will reduce the burden of red tape for small businesses like Dolcini, like St. Phillips, like so many others—Plan B Promotions. I can think of literally hundreds and hundreds in Vaughan that will have the opportunity to take advantage of this measure that's included in Bill 105 so that they can continue to plan for their own successes going down.

That means, as I said just a couple of minutes ago, that more than 60,000 businesses in Ontario will see a reduction in their taxes, including roughly 12,000 businesses that will no longer pay this tax at all. That's 12,000 businesses, Speaker. When I was referencing the 60,000 number just a minute or two ago—I think it's really important to stress that we don't just think about these numbers in an abstract way. Sixty thousand is a big number; 12,000 is a big number. Let's think about what the impact really is on those business owners, on their employees, on their families, on their communities, on someone who today doesn't even know that in six months or 12 months or 18 months they're going to be hired by one of these small businesses and given their own chance of prosperity, their own chance at economic security, because of the decisions that we've made in this budget. I think it's really important that we take that into account and that we don't just—in this place, I think it's often very easy for us to think about these numbers in that abstract way. I think it's important that we drill down and that we understand what the human impact is, or at least what the human potential is, or the impact on the human potential is, with some of these measures.

It is really important also to note that our government remains focused on creating the very best environment for a strong economy that creates good, high-paying jobs. I said a couple of minutes ago: At the very foundation of the decisions that we've made over the last number of months and that we will continue to make, we have to remember—and I'll keep repeating it because it's so crucial—that we are a government that believes passionately in investing in people, investing in infrastructure and doing what we can to support a dynamic and innovative business climate.

I see that my colleague from Scarborough–Guildwood is here: a recent arrival to this Legislature, someone who understands very well what it means to be in a community where supporting people and supporting infrastructure and supporting that business environment—especially when we take into account her background and the backgrounds of many other people here who have worked in a variety of sectors and have a very sincere understanding of what it means.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** I would think that even in communities like Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, the people living in that community would want to understand they are represented by a member and represented by a government that understands the importance of investing in them and investing in their infrastructure.

The small business owners in ridings like Nipissing and Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke and Scarborough–Guildwood would understand that it's important for us to knit these three aspects together—to merge, to blend these three—because that is the best way for us to continue to move Ontario's economy forward.

The measures that we've taken here in Bill 105, which I have said at length here today are very crucial for making sure that Ontario's economy remains strong—I think it's also important to note that these measures are not stand-alone, in many respects.

I talked at the outset of my remarks today about how our government has taken many evolutionary steps over the last 10 years to provide the kinds of support for people, the kinds of investments in infrastructure—we've made the kinds of decisions that matter, in order to support a dynamic and innovative business climate here in Ontario.

I think it's also important to take into account some of the other measures that we've taken, to demonstrate that evolutionary process that I believe has existed, and I believe we can demonstrate has existed, in Ontario over these last 10 years.

Our government has taken significant steps to cut taxes for business and create the right conditions for jobs and growth, to create that dynamic and innovative business climate that I talked about just a second ago.

Currently, Ontario's business tax cuts will deliver \$8.5 billion annually to business, improving Ontario's competitiveness and business investment climate. These include the harmonized sales tax, a more modern value-added tax. When fully phased in, the HST will result in the removal of about \$4.6 billion a year in embedded taxes paid by business.

Speaker, a few minutes ago, when I talked about how high Ontario ranks with respect to how popular we are for foreign direct investment, this is one of the measures that helps drive those kinds of outcomes for the province of Ontario. There are businesses in other parts of Canada, other parts of North America, other parts of the world that are looking for a place to put down roots, to set up. Be they small, be they medium, be they large, they look at a wide variety of indicators, understanding that there is

a dynamic and innovative business climate in a community like Ontario, in a province like Ontario, the kind of environment or climate that we continue to create with measures like the ones that exist in Bill 105 but also the kinds of measures that exist in other elements, other aspects, of budget 2013—the kinds of ideas, the kinds of elements that are at the very foundation of every single decision that Premier Kathleen Wynne and Minister Charles Sousa and the rest of the folks on this side of the House make, that help guide us in the decisions that we make. That's all very much at the very foundation of making sure we provide that kind of business climate, so that Ontario continues to be an attractive place for investors and prospective business owners.

We've also eliminated the capital tax. This is something that corporations paid, whether or not they had a profit, and was a significant disincentive to investment. We made sure that we took care of that. We also cut corporate income tax rates for small and large businesses.

Again, with respect to how crucial and important small business is in the community—the community of Ontario at large, Speaker, but even in communities like yours, in Hamilton; like mine, in Vaughan; like Ottawa Centre; like York West, my neighbour to the south; Richmond Hill, my neighbour to my east—in all of our communities, small business is crucial.

I know I spent a couple of minutes talking about the respect and the admiration that I have for entrepreneurs, women and men who decide, because of some initial spark of genius or flash of genius, that they have an idea or a service they want to provide. It is our job as a government to help enable that, not stifle it—to help enable that, enable their expertise, leverage their idea and provide them with supports, like the supports we see with respect to the moves that we are making on the EHT and cutting the corporate income tax rate for small and large businesses.

In addition to the actual business tax reductions, the HST and the streamlined CIT administration provide compliance cost savings of over \$635 million per year for businesses.

That might sound like a bit of an abstract line, and frankly, looking at it, it kind of is, this notion of compliance cost. But when I talk to business owners in my community of Vaughan, whether they're in Woodbridge or Maple or Kleinburg or other parts of my community, they tell me this matters a great deal to them. The fact that they had to spend so much time, energy and their own resources with respect to dealing with compliance issues was something that they felt was a significant disincentive to them, instead of being focused on what we, as a government, want them to focus on, which is helping to grow our economy by being innovative, by encouraging investment and by hiring as many people as they possibly can.

0940

We've done other things over the last number of months and years. We've introduced and passed cuts to the business education tax rate since 2007, resulting in

savings of over \$200 million for Ontario businesses. I know there are certain businesses, for example, in northern Ontario—some of our mills in northern Ontario—which have benefited from significant cuts to the business education tax component of what they once had to pay, thanks to the advocacy of individuals like both of our members from Thunder Bay, like the advocacy of the members from Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie and many, many others across northern Ontario. Mayors, councillors and business owners across the north came to us over the last number of years and talked to us about how we can help to encourage ongoing investment in their businesses. We took steps to provide these incentives and we continue to do so.

So there is a very clear path, a very clear evolution, a very clear route that we have decided—very, very importantly over the last 10 years, to take decisions on this side of the House, and we continue to do that, and you see evidence of it in budget 2013. We make our decisions through that lens of, “What will provide individuals and businesses with a sense of opportunity, with a sense of optimism and hopefulness for the future?”

I have said it repeatedly in my remarks today: We can't make every single decision for business, nor should we. We are not in the business of running businesses, that's true, but we are in the business of providing every single opportunity to enable those individuals who have that entrepreneurial flair, that drive, that desire, the innovative idea, that initial flash of genius to make the kinds of decisions to drive our economy forward. Whether we're Liberals, PCers or NDPers, it's our job to find the environment, by working together in this chamber to come up with ideas like Bill 105 so that we can reduce the burden that small businesses feel they have to participate in in order to do what we want them to do, which is to employ our families, our neighbours and our friends.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** I hear comments from somebody across the way. In that particular member's community, I'm pretty sure the small business owners are delighted to know that we are taking steps that will enable them to make the kinds of decisions that will employ her constituents. I sincerely hope, in the remarks that we hear from the third party at some point today at the second reading debate on Bill 105, that we hear the kind of constructive ideas that will help small business owners across the province understand that the parties stand united when it comes to actually trying to help small business owners, so that in turn, as I said a second ago, all of our constituents have an opportunity for a brighter future.

I think it bears mentioning—I have tons of other things I want to talk about—

**Mr. Rob Leone:** Please do.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** I plan to, and I appreciate that.

I think it also bears mentioning that there are some in this House who seem to think the most interesting and innovative way to drive an economy forward is to drive it



into the ditch. We've heard people on this side of the House talk very extensively about this right-to-work-for-less concept. Speaker, when I talk to small business owners in my community, what they tell me is, "Please do what you can to enable a brighter economic future for all of us, please do what you can to provide us with tools like the tools we see in Bill 105, but please also make sure that you can help create a high-wage economy," so that at the end of the day, whether somebody is running Dolcini, St. Phillips, Plan B Promotions or a car dealership, whatever it might be, they actually have customers who can afford to buy their products. This is all about making sure that we don't drive to the lowest common denominator, as members from the PC caucus want us to do.

Speaker, we make decisions on this side of the House to make sure that our economy remains strong because businesses have the opportunity to do what they do best, but at the same time, part of that is making sure that they employ women and men who have the kind of wages that can enable those women and men and their families to buy the services and goods those businesses and thousands of others like them across Ontario sell. Otherwise, this formula, this equation, doesn't work. We don't move Ontario's economy forward by making sure that too many of those folks get left behind because a certain caucus, the PCs in particular, want to drive wages down so that they actually reflect what's happening in the Deep South in America. This is not the direction the people of my community want us to go in, and this is not the direction, most importantly, that the business owners in my community want Ontario to move forward with. It makes no sense. It doesn't make economic or social sense.

That's why in budget 2013, and in particular with the measures that we are introducing and hoping to pass here in Bill 105, we are enabling those people who took that initial risk, who set up their small businesses, whose dream it was to provide a better future for themselves and for their kids. And most importantly, when I talk to most small business owners, it's not just about them, their spouse, their kids; it's about their employees as well. It's about that relationship, that kinship that they've developed with the people who they employ. They want to make sure that their employees do well; they want to make sure their kids' employees do well.

I have many businesses in my community—small, medium and large—where people have been employed in those businesses for better than two decades. That speaks to a fundamental relationship-building opportunity. When I think of a small business owner or a medium business owner in my community, that's what I think of. That's the symbol; that's the image that's in my head. I know that it's not any different in most other communities that we all represent around the province. They are people who care. They are people who drive our economy forward. They are the people who provide the lion's share of employment opportunities for people in all of our communities.

With Bill 105, we are helping to move their agenda forward. That's an agenda that will benefit all of us,

because it will help Ontario's economy continue to grow and prosper.

**Interjection:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** I'm not done just yet. I'm not done just yet.

There are other steps that we have taken over the last number of years. When I think about the stuff that we've done as a government, the ideas, the creativity, the energy that we have brought—Premier Wynne, Minister Sousa; other folks, like the member from Ottawa Centre; people such as the member from Mississauga—Brampton South, the member from Oakville, and so many others; the member from Ottawa—Vanier, the member from Guelph, the member from Pickering—Scarborough East—all of us, and many others on this side of the House—and yes, from time to time, speakers on the other side—

**Interjection:** From time to time.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** From time to time—not always; there's not always necessarily that consistent confluence or coming together of ideas and energy.

We have taken many decisions on this side of the House. For example, since 2009, the marginal effective tax rate on new business investment has been cut in half. This places Ontario below the average marginal effective tax rate among Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries and well below that same average in the United States.

Again, sometimes the language we use in this House—I think we all fall victim to this from time to time—sounds a little bit like too much jargon. Somebody watching at home might say, "What the heck did the member from Vaughan just reference?"

What the member from Vaughan just referenced with that one statistic, and many of the others that I've had the opportunity to present today, are examples of how we have created and continue to create that innovative and dynamic business climate so that small, medium and large business owners can make decisions that will help Ontario's economy continue to grow. Those are the kinds of decisions that move alongside or move in parallel with the kinds of decisions we're making: to invest in people and to invest in crucial infrastructure.

The infrastructure that we've invested in over the last 10 years—dozens of new hospitals that have been opened in the province of Ontario; new expansions to university campuses and college campuses; roads, highways, public transit—it continues to this very day.

I read a report just a couple of days ago from a certain organization, the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario, that said that for every \$1 billion invested in infrastructure renewal, the spinoff impact from an employment standpoint is roughly 34,000 jobs. I think I have the number right from the report: \$1 billion invested; 34,000 jobs. That's the correlation, the employment link. Again, 34,000 jobs: It's a big number. It's 34,000 people, 34,000 families that have a paycheque coming in because of every \$1-billion investment this government has made in infrastructure.

If you think back over the last 10 years, if you look at everything that we've accomplished in infrastructure

alone over the last 10 years, think of the tens and tens and tens of thousands of women and men working in the skilled trades in particular who have benefited directly because of those investments that we've made in their communities.

Though I wasn't a member in this House at that time, I think back to that period in the aftermath of 2008 and the aftermath of that global economic crisis, when there were national governments and subnational governments around the world that were paralyzed, that were suffering from a complete lack of understanding about how to move forward.

Here in Ontario, partnered in actual fact with the federal government, we made investments, millions and millions and millions of dollars—billions of dollars—of investments in helping to support Ontario's auto sector, but also investing in crucial public infrastructure so that in communities across Ontario—certainly in my riding of Vaughan—people could continue to be employed.

0950

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Good thing we didn't follow the Mitt Romney approach.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** Absolutely. The Mitt Romney approach, as the member from Peterborough cites, is driving folks to the bottom: driving wages down, driving opportunity down and driving an economy into the ditch. We've heard that exact same rhetoric from members of the PC caucus. I had the chance to actually spend some quality time with my friends in that caucus a number of days ago at their gathering in London. The conversations I had the opportunity to have in the hallways—I'll admit that their rubber chicken tastes an awful lot like ours at those gatherings; I will admit that much, at least. But I will also say that in the conversations I had with individuals in the hallways, it's clear to me that that is a party that doesn't have a clear understanding of the direction it wants to go in. They have 14 white papers they've been talking about, policies and ideas they've been talking about for two years. They had resolutions at the convention itself that bore no resemblance to those white papers. I'm not quite sure who's really in control of that party, but fundamentally—and this is what's most troubling for the people in my community and most troubling for the people of Ontario—it's not a question of whether it's a competition or a fierce battle inside that party between good ideas and better ideas; it's a competition or a fight between bad ideas and horrible ideas. That's something that's very troubling for a party that I know wants to put itself forward and make it sound like it has some wonderful sense of where Ontario should go. But when I listen to the 14 white paper policy ideas—and I've read through some of them—I see nothing more than an opportunity for businesses in my community and employees in my community to have less opportunity, to have less hope, to have less of a chance at earning a good living wage so that they themselves can continue to invest—less of an opportunity.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Bill 74 goes against everything you just said.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** The member from Hamilton—I believe it's Hamilton; forgive me if I'm wrong. I know, because I have friends and family who live in Hamilton—I was just in Hamilton the other day, as many of us were, and I know that small business owners in Hamilton, like in Toronto, like in Vaughan, Ottawa and all across the province of Ontario, want Bill 105 passed because they know this will help them leverage more opportunity, more economic development. This will help them, in turn, leverage more investment so they can hire more people so that small business owners in Hamilton can hire more Hamiltonians, or perhaps people who live in Burlington, Oakville or somewhere else, to come and work at their businesses. That's important in Hamilton, it's important in Vaughan and it's important right across the province of Ontario.

Going back to what I was saying a second ago, those same small business owners don't want us to create an economy where we effectively, because of their ideas to drive down wages, eviscerate their customer base. It makes no sense. It's not logical. I wondered, when I was in London, if there was a napkin left anywhere in any bar or restaurant in that town because of how they've developed their policy ideas: back-of-the-napkin style. I don't think there was. But fundamentally, in that battle, in that race to the bottom, in that battle between the bad and horrible, which we see in evidence, we see on display, on a daily basis—we know that's not the Ontario that the people outside this building believe in. It's not the Ontario they dream about, it's not the Ontario that they inherited from their parents, and it's certainly not the Ontario that they want to bequeath or pass on to their kids and grandkids.

That's why, for a decade, starting on this very day 10 years ago, those ideas, those policies, that opportunity, that determination to destroy what is fundamentally at the heart of Ontario's cultural, social and economic DNA has been rejected. It has been rejected three times over by the people of this province, Speaker, and it will continue to be rejected, because that is not a recipe for success for the people of Ontario, the small businesses of Ontario, for anybody in Ontario except—not even except for anyone. I don't know who it's a recipe for success for.

On the other hand, in budget 2013, with every decision that our government makes, that Premier Wynne and our team make, we invest in people, we invest in infrastructure, and we invest in supporting a dynamic and innovative business climate. That's why it's so important.

Just the other day I was talking to a business owner in my community. He was talking about how exciting it is—I was talking about the 427 extension at the outset of my remarks—about the investment the government of Ontario is making, for the decision we have made to expand or extend that highway 6.8 kilometres, from Highway 7 to Major Mackenzie Drive in my community: three interchanges, at Langstaff, Rutherford and Major Mackenzie Drive. It will service not only Vaughan and York region but also Brampton and Peel region. This particular landowner is delighted because he and the rest



of his business partners can now travel across North America and lure head offices, lure significant companies to come here because we have made a decision.

What we've provided the business owners in my community with, unlike a recipe that the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke and his colleagues have been peddling to no avail for 10 years, Speaker—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** You guys break any promises lately?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Renfrew—

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** What we have been doing in this community has put my community, and many others like it across Ontario—providing business owners with a plan.

In the case of the 427 extension, he knows that if he's approaching a business somewhere else in North America, he can say, "You know what? Come to Ontario," because not only do we have an attractive and innovative and dynamic business climate because of measures like the ones in Bill 105 and the rest of the stuff I talked about earlier from budget 2013, but you also have, in Vaughan's case, the opportunity to settle and build in the Vaughan enterprise zone, close to the new 427 extension, close to Highway 407—that would be the same highway they sold for a song when they should have kept it in public hands a number of years ago, the members from the PC caucus.

You're near the 407. You're near the 401. You're near the 427 extension. You're near Pearson airport. You're near the 400. What the business owners in my community can say is, "Come to Ontario. Come to York region. Come to the Vaughan enterprise zone. Bring your expertise with you. Bring your creativity with you. Bring your employees. Hire many, many other employees locally and help move Ontario's economy forward." They've had tremendous success, and they'll continue to have success, whether it's businesses like Adidas, businesses like Cuisinart and others—Sobeys—setting up massive facilities in my community because of the decisions we've made as a government.

That's why it's so important that all three caucuses continue to have interesting dialogue here in this House but never lose sight of the fact that we're not here to represent our own crass political interests, notwithstanding what the members from the PC caucus seem to believe. We are here to produce a better product for the people of Ontario.

When I think of my parents and I think of my grandparents, a set that came from Scotland and a set that came from Italy to this country to give us a better life, to give me and my siblings a better life, when I—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** Sorry, Speaker.

I think it's important to note, when I think of my grandparents, and when I think of my parents, and I think of my siblings and myself, I know what kind of Ontario it is that we want to leave to our kids.

I have two young daughters: an almost six-year-old and a two-and-a-half-year-old. I want them to grow up in

a community—and they are, Speaker; they are growing up in a community where they have the kind of economic opportunity, where they live in a society, where they live in a neighbourhood and a community where the social bonds are strong, and they understand that if they want to take on a trade, they'll have a fantastic opportunity. If they want to become a professional of some kind, they'll have a great opportunity because of the investments we've made in post-secondary. If they want to become a small business owner, they will understand, in years to come, that they have access to initiatives like the ones we've included in Bill 105 and in budget 2013 to enable them to do better, to enable them to have a more prosperous and secure future for their kids and for their grandkids.

I think of the education system and how much more robust it is today than it was 10 years ago. I think of our energy system in the province of Ontario, where it was 10 years ago and where it is today, Speaker. The difference is remarkable.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, the member from Renfrew is on a bit of a roll, isn't he? So we'll hope he'll take it back a notch, won't he? Thank you.

Continue.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. You know, I do understand the member. It hits a bit close to home for the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke and many of the others with which he serves in that caucus, because they understand, sitting here on the 10th anniversary of their first of three significant rejections by the people of Ontario, that what they have proposed for a decade, what they continue to propose, the way they look at things, their perspective, is not providing them with the kind of short-sighted political success that they are looking for, Speaker. That speaks to something more fundamental.

That's why the people of Ontario have embraced the Ontario Liberal government for 10 years. They continue to embrace Premier Wynne and the rest of our team because they see that we are making an earnest effort to reach out to both other parties in this place, but also to municipalities, to business owners. We are taking an earnest step toward supporting small businesses because of measures like the ones that we see here in Bill 105. We are taking on the challenges that we're confronted with.

Just the other day, Premier Wynne was in my riding. She was in my riding to highlight an initiative with respect to four bakeries in my community that have taken advantage of an economic development grant of \$1.2 million, which, in the grand scheme of things and the stuff that we debate in the House, might seem like a small number, but those four businesses managed to leverage that \$1.2-million provincial investment and hire 51 people—51 new jobs created for those four bakeries. That's 51 families—because, again, I don't like to talk about jobs or numbers; I think it's more important to talk about the real impact on people—that now have a

brighter future in that industry, because those businesses, small and medium, have partnered with our government and leveraged an innovative and creative \$1.2-million economic development grant to provide that more hopeful future, that more prosperous future.

**1000**

Again, whether it's what's in Bill 105 itself, this notion of providing that indexed-for-five-years opportunity for small businesses that have a payroll of less than \$450,000 to be exempt from the EHT—whether it's that measure; whether it's the billions and billions of dollars that we invested in communities like Sudbury, Scarborough–Guildwood, Ottawa Centre, York West, Guelph, Ottawa–Vanier, Richmond Hill, Oakville, Peterborough, Vaughan, Hamilton and all the other communities across Ontario; whether it's the way that we invest in people, because we have built a stronger health care system, because we have built a stronger and more robust education system that's producing the kind of results we need, and that's both at the elementary and secondary level and also at the post-secondary level; whether it's because of the initiatives we have undertaken with respect to our economic development; all of the steps combined that we have taken to create that dynamic and innovative business environment to invest in people, to invest in infrastructure, that's why it is so crucial here at second reading that all three parties in this chamber—and I say this almost every time I stand up to speak at any particular length about any particular bill.

When I go home on weekends, when I talk to people in my riding—whether they're friends, whether they're family—they understand that sometimes we have to play a bit of a game in this place, but what they really ultimately expect is, when you put aside some of the back and forth, some of the cut and thrust that we all do enjoy a little bit in this place, that fundamentally we are supposed to be here for them. Whether they are individuals, whether they are employees, whether they are business owners—whatever they happen to have taken on in terms of their life's work, they want to make sure, while we may have an idea and that caucus may want to change a semicolon and that caucus may want to change a paragraph, and the back and forth that takes place, that ultimately our sights are set on producing a final product that benefits them in their homes, in their neighbourhoods and in their municipalities and communities, whether they're in the north, whether they're in rural Ontario, whether they're somebody who was born here or somebody who came here, whether they're Franco-Ontarian—wherever they happen to be from. They want to make sure that we continue to work together for their kids, for their grandkids, for—in the case of those who don't have kids and grandkids—their neighbours' kids and grandkids—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** You're repeating yourself, Steven.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** Whether they're in Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke or Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, it doesn't matter. What's most important is that we move Ontario's agenda forward, that we continue to invest in

people, that we continue to invest in crucial public infrastructure—like the Vaughan hospital, the 427 extension, the subway to Vaughan that's under construction right now, the Viva BRT and so many other fantastic initiatives that we've taken on the infrastructure side—and that we continue to invest in supporting a dynamic and innovative business climate.

Bill 105 is a crucial cog in this entire picture that I have painted over the last 55 minutes or so. I call on everyone in this House to actually talk a little bit over the course of the debate here at second reading, but we need to move this bill forward, because by moving this bill forward, and many others like it coming from this side of the House, we will move Ontario forward together.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rob Leone:** I'm pleased to respond to the member from Vaughan in what was a good ad for the Liberal Party of Ontario. He talks at great length about small businesses, the plight of small businesses and the great things that the Liberal government has done for small businesses in Ontario.

I remember a survey a couple of years ago—I think it was done by the CFIB—that said that small businesses in Ontario, once surveyed after four years in business, said three quarters of them wouldn't do it again. That speaks to the climate that this government has created for small businesses in the province of Ontario. It's a terrible wreck. They've done nothing for small businesses.

I noticed that the member from Vaughan likes to talk about all of the “investments” that are being made by their government. Well, investments are being made, obviously, on an overdraft account; they have no money. Spend, spend, spend: That's all I heard from the member from Vaughan. What he hasn't told us is that in their own budget, in the last year of their plan, they actually are going to spend \$800 million less in program spending but have not outlined what they're going to cut. In addition to that, they're going to spend \$4 billion more on interest charges servicing that debt. That's a \$5-billion hole, and they have not told the people of the province of Ontario how they're going to manage, what programs they're going to cut, what services are going to be no longer available for the people of the province of Ontario.

So it's all nice and flowery when they start talking about writing cheques, but they never, ever talk about the kinds of difficult decisions that they're going to have to make in order to balance the books in the time frame that they've stated. Where is that \$5 billion going to come from? What services are going to be cut? Don Drummond has listed a number of recommendations to get us there. They seem not willing to take any one that's going to get them closer to balancing the books.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Mr. Speaker, there are few folk in this Legislature more passionate about small business than myself. I had a small business; my son has a small business. And there's no party more passionate about small business than the New Democrats. That's why we



demand of the Liberals that they put this bill into place. It is absolutely unfair that the Royal Bank and someone with one employee are treated the same, so this changes that.

Also, I have to say a shout-out to TABIA and to the Bloor West Village BIA, the very first BIA in the entire world, started over 40 years ago in my riding.

That's why we in the New Democratic Party also fought and won some concessions—not all—from the Liberal government on the business education tax and making that fairer for small business, because this is about Main Street, not the mall. This is about that group that represents that place in our economy that gives us 85% of our new employees, our new jobs. We get that in the New Democratic Party. We understand that. That's why we are champions for this sector, and that's why we know it's a struggle in that sector.

There are a number of ways that we could address more the needs of small business, and quite frankly we're not doing it. One of their demands is to rationalize the MPAC system; it's hurting small business. Another of their demands is to look again at the business education tax because it's still not fair enough. These are demands that small business is putting forward—not only small business—but their demands are falling on deaf ears, I'm afraid, with this Liberal government.

Luckily, today, as one of our conditions for support, the Liberals have put into place our demand—and this is our demand—for closing this loophole.

Again, yay to small business. Thank you for all you do. I wish we could do more for you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today and speak on behalf of the small businesses in my own riding. The small businesses in my riding are the soul and heart of my community. They are those who work very hard, they are those who employ quite a few people and they are those who make the economy stable. They are those who get involved in community organizations. They are those who chair those organizations that a lot of people in my riding rely on. They are those who are involved in the church fundraisers. They are ones who will be at the archbishop's fundraiser next week to help the less fortunate of our community.

I come from a small business family. I'm the only public servant in my family. My father was a small business person. My brother now has the business. My brother is in the lumber business and went through all of the ups and downs of the economy, but luckily he survived. He is a great citizen for the community where I come from. So I understand the challenges that they have. I understand that we need to support them. I understand that they are very important for the economy of Ontario.

Last weekend, we were in Hamilton. I was very shocked to hear how Hamilton is doing well. They have less unemployed people than anywhere in Ontario and in Canada. That's what I was told by the business commu-

ity there. I didn't hear that in the past, and I want to congratulate small business people from Hamilton.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It's a pleasure to comment on the address by the member from Vaughan, which could be titled *Fantasia*, because the Ontario that he's talking about there is a dream. They talk about someone who walks through this world wearing a pair of rose-coloured glasses. Where has he been? Has he really not talked to any real people? Does he just get his messaging from the jug of Kool-Aid in the whip's office? I mean, is this where he gets his messaging? Good Lord, Mr. Speaker, has he not been around in his own riding or across Ontario and listened to small businesses?

Yes, this bill is a good step, but it's only recognizing the reality of inflation, and they didn't need an exemption before you people brought in an employee health tax. That was the biggest tax increase in Ontario's history.

You've got to actually get out of your cocoon; you've got to get off the Kool-Aid intravenous pump that you must be on, because you actually have to get out there where the real people are. Talk to the small businesses who have been hurt so badly in this province under 10 years of Liberal rule—10 years of Liberal rule.

Go to a small business and ask them, "How are you coping with red tape under this government?" Ask them, "How are you coping with the increases in electricity charges under this government? How are you coping with the additional energy charges of other kinds under this Liberal government?"

You want to talk about a one-sided story from the member for Vaughan? Anybody out there in TV land who was listening to what he was saying this morning would think that this guy was from another planet. I can't comment on his personal address, but they would not believe that he's actually living in today's Ontario under the mess that the Liberals have made.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Vaughan has two delicate minutes to respond.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to begin by thanking the member from Cambridge, the member from Parkdale-High Park, the member from Ottawa-Vanier and even the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke for their comments and, I would say, questions. I'm not quite sure I heard any questions in there. I heard more barbs, I suppose.

There are a couple of things I do want to say in my final minute and 40 or so seconds. One thing is, to the member from Cambridge and to the rest of the folks operating in that caucus: When the member from Cambridge spoke, again, he got up and he talked in a very jargony kind of way. He talked about numbers.

I think what's most important to recognize, and I said this throughout my comments earlier this morning, is that when we move forward with initiatives like the ones in Bill 105, we are not doing it for the sake of some big number, though it will help 60,000 businesses. We're doing it for the families, the 60,000 small business owners, the 12,000 small business owners that will now

be permanently exempt from the EHT. We're doing it for the families of those in which they find themselves as business owners, but also the families that they employ. It's most important to think about those people, not these broad, sort of high-level numbers that sometimes we all fall prey to talking about here.

To the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke: I've only been in this place for 12 months as a member of the Legislature. I've been very proud to serve my community of Vaughan. Everything I put on the record here today is in fact true, and a fact. The hospital, the other infrastructure, the 427 extension, the BRT that we're doing with Viva that's servicing all of York region: These are all things that are taking place, that are employing literally thousands of women and men in my community at this very moment.

I suppose I can understand and almost sympathize with a certain degree of the derision in that member's voice, Speaker, because if I had been rejected and my party had been rejected three times over, in such a resounding and compelling way, by the people of Ontario, I'd probably feel as bitter as he does.

The good news for me is that I'm part of this team, and this is the team that today is celebrating 10 years of moving Ontario forward together, 10 years of building a stronger economy, not moving Ontario into the ditches as those folks on that side are proposing to do.

I call on everyone—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Time.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:**—to pass this at second reading and take it to committee.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thanks for the assistance from the member from Renfrew.

It being 10:15 or close to, this House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

*The House recessed from 1014 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** I'm proud to welcome one of my constituents to Queen's Park today: Burlington's Arthur Gallant, one of five Canadians, and the only Ontario resident, selected to serve as a spokesperson for this year's Faces of Mental Illness campaign, which is part of Bell's Let's Talk mental health initiative. He's here to help promote Mental Illness Awareness Week, which runs from October 6 to 12. Welcome to Queen's Park, Arthur.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Speaker, I hope that you will indulge me for just a few moments. This is Kingston day at Queen's Park, the second time that we're doing this, and I'd like to introduce a whole group of people who are here today.

It starts off with the city council. Mayor Mark Gerretsen is here, together with councillors Jeff Scott, Sandy Berg, Dorothy Hector and Jim Neill. Hal Linscott is here, the city lawyer. Also with the city are Melanie Ryttersgaard and Susan Nicholson.

From the Kingston chamber of commerce, we have Matt Hutcheon here, who's the chief executive officer, along with Bill Stewart.

From the Rogers K-Rock Centre, we have Lynn Carlotto and Nick DeLuco.

From the Kingston Economic Development Corp., we have our world-renowned town crier—many times a world champion—Chris Wyman, together with Connie Markle and Melissa Shorrock.

From Queen's University, one of the best universities in the entire world, we have Principal Daniel Woolf, and Sheilagh Dunn.

From St. Lawrence College, which is also absolutely second to none when it comes to the college world, we have President Glenn Vollebregt, Gordon MacDougall and Morgan Davis here, as well as Victoria Stinson.

We also have here Wendy Vuyk and Rory O'Donnell from the Seniors Association, one of the most active in the entire province. We have Diane Luck and Catherine Milks.

From the Sir John A. commission—we'll be celebrating the 200th anniversary of Sir John A.'s birthday in 2015—is Mary Rita Holland, who will be known to some of my NDP colleagues.

From the Downtown Kingston! BIA, we have Jan MacDonald and Lily Roebuck.

I think I've named everybody who is here, but there are many other people here. Join us all at 11:30 in rooms 228 and 230 for Kingston day at Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Now that ministerial statements are over, it's time for responses.

I couldn't resist.

The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** I'd just remind members that this morning at 9 o'clock, unanimous consent was given for members to wear a lovely blue pin in recognition and in memory of missing aboriginal women. If you haven't received your pin, it's in your respective lounges.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On behalf of the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, regarding page Megan Lai: mother, Judia Mark; father, Terry Lai; grandmother Kin Law; grandfather, Lee Lai; and Principal Derek Gaudet are here in the gallery, visiting. Welcome to Queen's Park.

I'm going to take this up with the Clerk, but I believe the town crier's hat is better than mine.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### ELECTION ADVERTISING

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My question to the Premier. Premier, you'll recall—and I know we had a personal conversation as well—that the Chief Electoral Officer has pointed out the problem with third-party groups, like the Working Families Coalition, hijacking democracy, in effect warping the democratic process to advance their



own agenda at the expense of taxpayers. You and I had a conversation about that.

The Chief Electoral Officer has called for reforms to limit the insidious influence of the third-party special interests. I want to congratulate my colleague from Chatham-Kent-Essex, Mr. Nicholls, on bringing a bill forward to do exactly that.

Premier, in the spirit of co-operating to do the right thing, will you co-operate with the Ontario PC caucus and close this loophole that has influenced politics for far too long?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I would just say to the Leader of the Opposition that I know he remembers that we are the party that has brought in rules around third-party advertising during campaigns, and I'll just go over them in case he hasn't remembered those. In 2007, we introduced third-party advertising rules in Ontario for the first time. That was in 2007. Under the current rules, third parties that spend \$500 or more on election advertising are required to register with the Chief Electoral Officer, and the registered third parties have to also report to the CEO on election advertising expenses. If election advertising expenses are \$5,000 or more, then those reports have to be audited. Those rules ensure that there's transparency. Mr. Speaker, there were no rules in place before we brought those in. So we're very interested in transparency and understanding exactly who's donating and what is being paid and having those statements audited.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Obviously, that's a disappointing answer from the Premier. It sounded more like Pat Dillon talking than I'd expect from the Premier of the province of Ontario.

You know, Premier, you were actually on the receiving end of the big stick of big labour in the recent Kitchener-Waterloo by-election. As you know, big labour, including the teachers' unions, spent \$1.1 million in advertising just for one by-election. The combined advertising spending of the Liberals and the PCs was \$370,000. This is not a level playing field. It's not in the interests of real working families, taxpayers in our province.

The lesson you should have learned is to close that loophole and eliminate the insidious influence of these special interest groups. Instead, the lesson you learned was to leap back into the pockets of big labour and give them everything they wanted, including the ability to decide what teachers get hired in the classroom and raises we can't afford.

Premier, tell me that you've rethought your approach to get back into the pockets of big labour, and do the right thing for the people in the province, Ontario taxpayers, and close this ugly loophole and level the playing field for all political parties.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, I would remind the Leader of the Opposition that we're the party who put rules in place where there were no rules. So we're very interested in transparency.

I would just say that one of the things that really worries me about the current political climate is that there is a serious underestimation and, I think, almost an insult towards the people of the province, towards voters, that somehow they can't figure out what is going on. I believe they need more information. That's why we put—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I've noticed a trend, and I'm going to ask that it be stopped, and that is, as soon as the person stands up to answer the question, shouting down happens. That's not appropriate.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think that—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, come to order. As soon as I sat down, it started again. Don't. Don't.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** There need to be rules in place, Mr. Speaker. We put rules in place. I believe the democratic process means that a whole range of people need to have opinions. They need to be able to express those opinions. I think the Leader of the Opposition is underestimating the voters of this province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Frankly, Premier, the only insult to taxpayers is that you're letting Pat Dillon and big labour run the province of Ontario. I think you're missing the essential point here, why this is a problem. The problem is that the influence of these insidious third parties is—that they're hijacking democracy. Effectively, they're buying election campaigns, and you don't understand that at the end of the day it's average hard-working taxpayers who pay the price. Their taxes have gone up. The deficit has skyrocketed—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Excuse me. Sorry for interrupting. This goes both ways. I want the question put and I want the answer provided without the interference and without the yelling.

Please carry on.

1040

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** You miss the problem here. The problem is that average hard-working families are paying the price. The debt is that much deeper. They don't get the services they deserve. There are fewer jobs available to Ontarians because of bully boys like Pat Dillon who want to turf-protect at the expense of and to raid the pockets of hard-working taxpayers.

Why don't we follow the approach that other provinces have done and that exist in federal legislation? Let's level the playing field, let's restore democracy and let's take away the special interest influence on your government that is bankrupting the province of Ontario.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.  
Thank you.  
Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The Leader of the Opposition is talking about his perspective on the things that have happened over the last 10 years, and I just want to give our perspective. We've created over 600,000 new jobs; we've provided \$1 billion in tax relief to Ontario manufacturers since 2010; 2.1 million more Ontarians have access to family care; 4,000 more doctors are practising in this province; 16,400 new nursing positions have been created; 23 new hospitals have been built; 480 new schools have been built; 184,000 children are enrolled in full-day kindergarten. We have 60,000 new spaces in post-secondary education—which means 160,000 young people have access to post-secondary.

You're right. Things have changed in the last 10 years. The plan of the opposition leader has been rejected three times, Mr. Speaker. I think that's what he's upset about, and I think he underestimates the voters of this province—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please.  
New question.

#### ELECTION ADVERTISING

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** My question is for the Premier. Today in Ontario, we see a situation where more money is being spent on advertising during election periods by third-party organizations than the major political parties. Premier, this isn't fair, nor is this democracy. Elected officials should be accountable to the people who elect them, not the special interest groups and powerful unions.

Tomorrow, I will be introducing the Special Interest Groups Election Advertising Transparency Act. If passed, this bill will put a cap on third-party spending during election periods. Premier, this is about allowing all political parties to have an open, honest debate during elections without the unacceptable propaganda we see from these third-party groups.

Premier, will you work with us and pass this bill?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I think I've answered this question a couple of times, but I'm happy to do it again. In 2007 we brought rules into an area where there were no rules. The member opposite talks about accountability for the people who elect us. I agree with that, Mr. Speaker. Having more transparency and more accountability in place is exactly why we brought in the rules that we did in 2007 when we introduced third-party advertising rules in Ontario for the first time. There were no rules. There had been no rules put in place at all previous to that, Mr. Speaker. Now, third parties that spend \$500 or more on election advertising—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's not going to work. I will tell you, my patience is a little thin on this one because it's simply shouting people down.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** So if they spend \$500 or more, they are required to register with the Chief Electoral Officer. They have to report to the Chief Electoral Officer on advertising expenses if that is more than \$5,000. If it's more than \$5,000, those have to be audited. That kind of transparency is exactly what's needed.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Premier, you said that you want to be open and transparent and that you want a government that is accountable. Accountable to whom, Premier: the people of Ontario or the unions that do your bidding? How do you justify not supporting this bill or not allowing your members to vote their conscience?

As each election passes, the amount of money spent by the US-style super PACs in Ontario grows, and so does the influence held by special interest groups. This is not the Ontario that I grew up in.

Premier, will you do the right thing and support my private member's bill and put an end to the unelected and unaccountable influence currently held by special interest groups?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.  
Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let me say again that I agree there needs to be transparency on who is advertising in these situations. There needs to be accountability for the money that's being spent. That's why we put in place rules where there had been no rules, and I've gone over those a couple of times. If election advertising expenses are \$5,000 or more, then those reports have to be audited so it's very clear what is being spent.

But I will just go back to something that I said earlier to the Leader of the Opposition. I believe that this gambit actually underestimates the people of Ontario and voters' capacity to make decisions. I think that in elections and, quite frankly, between elections there should be broad debate on issues. There should be many, many voices talking about issues to elected officials and to each other within communities. That's the way good decisions get made. That's the way good policy gets made. Stifling that is not our objective.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Premier, this isn't about underestimating the people's ability in Ontario to make informed decisions. This bill is in the best interest of all political parties—to put a cap on the enormous amount of money being spent by third parties. If you truly believe that your party is right and that your ideas will be accepted by the people of Ontario in the next election, then allow an honest and open debate by putting a cap on third-party advertising.

What kind of a province do we live in where third-party groups are allowed to spend more than political



parties? They don't have spending limits, they don't have to report all of their donations and they don't have to report all of their spending.

Premier, my final question is simple: How can you stand there and say that this isn't completely outrageous? Will you support my bill tomorrow?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** One of the things that we did when we came into office is we changed the rules around the way government advertising could work, because one of the things that was happening under the previous regime of the PCs was that tax dollars were being spent on very partisan advertising with a picture of the leader and all sorts of attribution to a particular individual on issues that really were to do with government decisions.

We changed the rules so that government advertising had to go through the Auditor General. I think that's the kind of transparency that people in the province want to see. I believe the party opposite underestimates the voters of this province. We put rules in place to make sure that there was transparency on the expenditure of dollars by third parties. I think that is what is necessary—and I hope that the third party understands that when private members' bills are brought forward, people on this side of the House make their own decisions.

### COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. Yesterday, the government filed a motion in order to shut down debate on a number of bills, including one custom-designed for EllisDon, one of the Liberal Party's biggest donors.

Can the Premier confirm that it's still her intention to ram this bill through?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Last Friday, the Ontario Divisional Court issued a ruling overturning the Ontario Labour Relations Board decision regarding the Ontario Sheet Metal Workers' and Roofers' Conference, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 586 and the EllisDon corporation.

Our lawyers at the Ministry of Labour have reviewed the decision. I have been advised that the ruling means that the status quo for the company is maintained. This decision achieves the same outcome as intended under private member's Bill 74.

1050

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Well, Speaker, that's about as clear as muddy waters. I'd like to read a quote that could have been written today:

"The government has grown further and further out of touch with your needs.

"They have favoured special interests over the public interest.

"We know that the government of Ontario belongs to the people of Ontario. Our decisions will be made in the interests of all Ontarians, not those of a select few."

Can the Premier tell us who the source of that quote might have been, Speaker?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** To the Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Our decisions are going to be made based on a rational process. As the Minister of Labour said last Friday, the Divisional Court made a ruling that quashed the decision of the OLRB, the Ontario Labour Relations Board, so in other words, the company can continue to operate under the status quo. I understand that the parties have been given 15 days to appeal, if they so choose, and I've been advised that this ruling achieves exactly the same outcome that was being sought by the member opposite's private member's bill. I therefore believe that this bill is no longer needed. We will not be supporting it. I will not be supporting it, assuming that the decision is not appealed. So that's the decision.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Start the clock.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Hail Pat! Pat Dillon!

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. The member from Renfrew will come to order.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Lord Pat! King Pat!

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I don't know what it is, but if I ask you to do that and as soon as I say it you then start it again, I'm going to say that if you're challenging me, I'm going to win.

Premier, wrap up.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** That's it. It was done.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Just to remind the Premier, the quote is of course from the platform of the Liberal Party some 10 years ago. Today, as the Premier scrambles to protect the interests of one well-connected company—or maybe not, considering what she just said—as the government scrambles to defend their decision to spend at least half a billion dollars cancelling private power plants in Mississauga and Oakville, as people see well-connected insiders expensing everything in sight while everyday people are still waiting for results that will improve their lives, does the Premier realize that she has become exactly what she campaigned against?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm just trying to sort out what's going on over there, because on the one hand, the Tories are suggesting that I'm serving an organized labour master, and the NDP is alleging that I'm serving a corporate master, so—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm probably going to do something a little on the unorthodox side and ask everyone if they wouldn't mind standing up and yelling

as hard as they can for the next five minutes. There are some interesting solutions that people have recommended that I should be doing, and I continue to fight on your behalf, indicating that I think you can be self-disciplined, and that these are inappropriate kinds of comments that elevate the discussion as opposed to bringing it down to a civil discourse. So I'll put it into your hands.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** In fact, neither of those characterizations is accurate, Mr. Speaker. There was a private member's bill that was brought forward to correct an anomalous situation that had resulted from legislation in 1958. I suggested that that was—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Prince Edward—Hastings, please go to your seat.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:**—because of that uneven ground in that anomalous situation.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** So I can you tell you to stop.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The circumstances have changed. The court has ruled that the status quo can pertain, and because the circumstances have changed, we believe that that bill is no longer required. That is the situation.

## TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question, in fact, is for the Minister of Transportation. Yesterday, the Minister of Transportation refused to answer questions concerning the construction of the Herb Gray expressway. Can the Minister of Transportation confirm now that girders used in construction do not meet safety standards?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, the independent expert review report, which we just received 48 hours ago, was tabled. The complete answer to the leader of the third party's question is in that report. It very carefully measures a very thoughtful evaluation of a complex number of girders, some of which clearly are safe and some of which there are questions about.

This was an independent review by four of the leading construction engineering experts in Canada and one of our greatest legal minds. The report, Mr. Speaker, was delivered to the chief engineer, Mr. Cripps, who is one of the most respected—it is the chief engineer of Ontario's decision. He is now moving on the implementation of those recommendations and on a pathway that a group of engineers have made.

This is not a political decision. This is an engineering decision. No girder will be installed in that parkway that is not safe, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** How long has the ministry known there were safety issues in this project, and when did they inform the public and the minister?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I didn't hear the question.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I don't think anybody knew much about this for a very long time, because it was not part of a public conversation. No one raised this with me in February or in March or in April. I first heard about concerns from discussions I was having with people in the industry in May, Mr. Speaker.

I then took immediate action. I made phone calls to verify the information I was hearing. I immediately raised it with my officials. My officials investigated. Based on their report back, I felt immediate action and strong action was needed by the government to assemble engineers to get expert advice to ensure the safety and standards.

I also ordered that work be halted on the project, that no further girders be installed and that no girders would be installed that didn't meet safety standards—not decisions by a politician, Mr. Speaker, but by the standard that has given Ontario the safest roads and highways in North America, the decisions of the chief engineer of Ontario. My job is to keep the politics out of this and keep the engineer in charge of this—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Well, Speaker, at this point the people of Windsor have a pretty basic question: How could the government, on a project of such importance, costing billions of dollars, fail to ensure that safety standards were being met in the first place on this project?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, the exact opposite is true. This government has, on every single project—\$14 billion in infrastructure projects every year—ensured not just moderate standards but the highest safety standards in North America; better than New York, California, Alberta or Quebec—the highest in North America.

We are the watchdogs. The opposition is supposed to be the watchdogs. Mr. Speaker, she has members in that area. Why did the opposition not ask a single question on safety standards in the Windsor-Essex Parkway? I did my job; maybe they ought to do theirs.

## PAN AM GAMES

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Speaker, my question is actually to the Minister of Finance today—and if I may say, the Liberals are anything but watchdogs.

Maybe the finance minister, previously in charge of the Pan Am Games, will have some answers for me, since the current counterpart abdicated himself from his responsibility for Pan Am yesterday in estimates. Yesterday it was like pulling teeth, Minister, to get the truth about the many duplicitous Pan Am budgets.

We know about the so-called \$1.4-billion Pan Am budget. We recently learned about the extra \$10 million for the secretariat's partying and paperwork budget, and the extra \$719 million for the athletes' village. No doubt today we will learn about numerous other extra budgets for security, transportation, and Lord knows what else.

Minister, how many Pan Am budgets are there exactly? What is the for-real total for the Pan Am



Games? What is the total? What are the games going to cost us?

1100

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport and minister responsible for the Pan/Parapan American Games.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I know the opposition wants to muddy the water, but they cannot muddy the facts. These are the facts: In 2009, the Pan Am bid book pre-budget stated "village." The village is outside the 2015 budget. In April 2009, a press release stated, "Not in the 2015 budget." It's to revitalize the West Don Lands community. In the 2013 provincial budget—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek can't do a drive-by heckle.

**Hon. Michael Chan:**—village addition is to the 2015 budget. These are the facts, backed up by public documents.

Through you, Speaker, to the member opposite, we know your leader does not read the budget and says, "No," but you should.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please.

*Supplementary?*

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Speaker, amazingly, they've admitted there are multiple budgets. Yes, we knew they were lined up. Thank you for admitting that today, Minister. I want to know what the true cost of the games is. The athletes' village is no different than the other venues that have a legacy cost attached to them after the games. You know that, and you need to be honest about it.

To clarify, the current Minister of Finance was actually the minister of lavish Pan Am parties and multiple top-secret budgets. He even proudly stated to me—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Again, I will remind the member that you refer to anybody by their exact title or their riding, and nothing else.

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Thank you, Speaker.

He even proudly stated to me that "the buck stops with me," the Pan Am minister. But all the international partying that was reputed for its grandiosity happened with him in charge, and now he's in charge of the books.

In fact, the culture of entitlement rampant in that ministry didn't happen overnight, either. As we heard in estimates yesterday, there's a \$10-million Pan Am party and paperwork budget hidden off the books within the secretariat.

Minister, how much have the Liberals blown on Pan Am parties?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Talk about abuse of expenses. There is one person in this House, allow me to remind the members, who expensed \$3.20 for a box of chicken nuggets. In August 2009: \$87.40 to have a meal with his colleague. In 2009, September: \$1.27 for a Tim Hortons coffee. He expensed that coffee. November 13: \$77 for Irish nachos and chicken wings at Don Cherry's restaurant. Speaker, it is the Leader of the Opposition. He did

that 10 years ago, and he did that again four years ago. He's a repeat offender of abusing taxpayers' money.

## TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** My question this morning is to the Minister of Transportation. Minister, may I say, by the way, thank you for providing me that briefing this morning on the safety of the girders on the Herb Gray Parkway.

I haven't read all of the report yet, it's more than 140 pages, but if I can quote from page 132, the girders were "fabricated without full and proper compliance with all regulations, codes and standards, with tack welding not approved by a regulatory authority and with welders whose own certification credentials and workmanship are subject to review."

Minister, where was the ministry oversight, the quality control, when 500 deficient girders were allowed to be installed in the biggest, most expensive highway project in Ontario's history?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** It was exactly when that information—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** This is an important matter of great interest to the people of Windsor and Ontario. Maybe we could have a little quiet in the House deserving of the seriousness of this matter. Mr. Speaker, I can barely hear myself speak or think.

First of all, I want to thank the member opposite. I look forward to working with him. I think we share a concern that safety and durability standards have to be up to Ontario's high standards, and I will commit to him that we will, as I've said before, not open a single bridge or roadway until those standards are achieved to the satisfaction of the chief engineer. It was because of the actions that he described that, when I became aware of them, I immediately took action by taking an inquiry and turning it over to the chief engineer.

Mr. Speaker, this is a new government. Premier Wynne has asked us, as ministers, to take charge of our files—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Done. Supplementary?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Five hundred deficient girders by the Spanish supplier on the biggest parkway project in Ontario: This report makes it clear that the 500 girders are not up to code, yet the minister has chosen not to insist that the manufacturer replace them at the supplier's cost.

Minister, you've chosen a seven-point remediation plan instead of replacement. I don't know if this is the least expensive option of the two because I haven't found that in the report yet, but what are the long-term safety guarantees of the remediation option?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** As I was trying to finish, the Premier has asked each of us to take charge of our files and not wait for problems to arise but to get on top of them. We took that strong action right away. We didn't

wait for the Auditor General or the Ombudsman or anyone else—or the opposition. We took that action.

Those 500 girders: The safety of anything that has been installed or will be installed will not be my choice. These will not be my decisions and they certainly won't be made on budgetary choices. They will be made purely on engineering and safety standards. There was not an accountant or a politician involved in this decision. It was the expert engineers and the chief engineer who made this decision free and clear, without even a discussion with me, who came forward and said, "From an engineering and safety perspective, this is the right choice." I trust the chief engineer of Ontario; he's the one who should be making these decisions.

### TOURISM

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** My question is to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. Basketball is one of the most popular sports of youth in my riding of Scarborough–Rouge River. After school and on weekends, driving through my riding, there's never an empty basketball court.

On Monday, constituents of mine, many Torontonians and I were excited to hear the news that Toronto will host the 2016 NBA all-star game. The NBA all-star weekend is one of the most anticipated sporting events of the year. This annual event showcases the skills of some of the world's best basketball players. For all basketball fans here in Ontario and for supporters of the Toronto Raptors, this is great news to know that this event will be right here in our great city. I know that it will showcase Toronto to the basketball world.

Can the minister please explain the government's support for such a great event here in Ontario and how it will benefit us?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Yes, the NBA all-star basketball game is coming to town. It will create jobs and strengthen our economy. Allow me to give you some numbers here: Organizers expect that the festivities will attract 100,000 attendees; 75,000 tourists and 30,000 overnight visitors, which will result in almost 28,000 hotel room nights in the span of 10 days.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, I believe, has now been spoken to twice, if not three times.

1110

**Hon. Michael Chan:** The events will be broadcast in 215 countries, in over 44 languages, with more than 1,800 media members covering it. The total broadcast audience is estimated to be in excess of a whopping 200 million viewers.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** The response from the minister definitely demonstrates the magnitude of this event, and also the benefit it will have on Toronto's economy. It is good to know that the government is taking an active role in fostering and promoting large-scale events to be

hosted here in Ontario. As the minister said, an event like this will be bringing in many tourists, who will not only witness the activities of this event but will also be able to enjoy many of the aspects of our city, such as restaurants, shops and attractions. This is definitely a good thing.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister now tell us what else the Celebrate Ontario program does to further our province's profile and attract visitors from out of province?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I am more than happy to do that. I am pleased to advise that Ontario festivals and events attract tourists, create jobs and strengthen our economy. Every year, they support over 22,000 jobs in Ontario and generate millions of dollars in revenue.

In 2011, we enhanced the Celebrate Ontario program by offering a new Blockbuster category. This category is helping our province attract major national and international events that will further build Ontario's reputation as a must-see destination. By offering new and improved experiences, event organizers can attract more tourists and increase visitor spending.

### PAN AM GAMES

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** My question is to the Minister of Finance. Minister, yesterday at committee, Ontarians learned that your government failed to include the cost of the athletes' village in the Pan Am Games' \$1.4-billion budget. Minister, if the \$719 million for the athletes' village isn't included in the Pan Am Games' budget, then where is the remainder of the money coming from?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** It's interesting to hear these gentlemen ask these questions when they have been part of the discussions for the last two years. I don't know where you guys have been. I certainly don't know where the critic has been. He has been in the office. He has been advised. When we released the Pan Am bid, it was very clear that it was in regard to the operating venues. The village and all the properties therein—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Leeds–Grenville will come to order. The member from Chatham–Kent–Essex will come to order. The member from—all of you.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** We were very clear from the outset that the Pan Am village was a village made for the residents of Toronto. It's going to be a YMCA. It's going to help George Brown College for residence. It's going to provide social housing. And they are marketable homes in the end, which is going to provide and allow for us to repay some of the expenses.

It's a great opportunity for the city of Toronto and for the province of Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Again, to the Minister of Finance: Your priorities are misplaced. Instead of investing money into projects like the subway plan that is approved by the city, the federal government and the people of Scarborough, you choose to bankroll the Pan Am Games executives' lavish parties. Rumour has it that you were



taking money from other ministries—like affordable housing, when places like Hamilton, Barrie and Cornwall are in desperate need.

Minister, come clean: Where is the \$719 million to build the village coming from?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** The money was already accounted for, and we negotiated the tail end of the deal to bring back more value to taxpayers for the province of Ontario.

The member opposite is suggesting that maybe we should expense the 407 extension for the Pan Am Games or the air-rail link from Union to the airport for the Pan Am Games. What about the HOV lanes for the Pan Am Games?

At what point do we distinguish between what is being done for the infrastructure and long-term benefit of the city of Toronto versus what is being done for the entire province—and that's to help our athletes so that they can train at home and succeed at home, and enable us to have a legacy for future generations. That's what Pan Am is doing right around the province of Ontario.

#### PAN AM GAMES

**Mr. Paul Miller:** My question is to the Minister of Tourism. Yesterday, we learned that the cost of the Pan Am Games was not \$1.4 billion like Ontarians have been told for years—since 2010—but actually, it's \$2.1 billion. Why I say that is, the fact that this government would create a separate set of books for the athletes' village and not include them in the costs reported to the public is beyond infuriating.

Will this minister now tell Ontarians about any other games costs they haven't been transparent about and have not included in the overall budget?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** My advice to the member opposite is: Calm down. Take some time; be patient. Read the 2013 provincial budget. Calm down again. Take some time, and read the April 2009 release by the government, at that time released by Mr. George Smitherman. Again, take some time; calm down. And also, read the big book—the big budget—where it clearly states that the village is outside of the TO2015 budget.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** With all due respect to the minister, if we calmed down, this place would be in a bigger mess.

Speaker, the minister is acting like it is an achievement of the Pan Am Games executives to pay back the 91-cent parking claim. With all due respect, there are a few more things out there than the parking claim. With a \$700-million cost overrun that we learned about yesterday, Ontario taxpayers are more concerned than ever about the true cost of the games. The lack of accountability and transparency by this minister is mind-boggling. Ontario taxpayers demand that the minister come clean and reveal now the real, full cost of the games to the people of Ontario, who deserve that answer.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Thank you again for the question.

Where we stand at the moment is fantastic; it's great. Allow me to say that all the capital budget is under way. They are on time, on budget and, in the early report to us, they are under budget by about \$15 million.

Our ministry performed an internal audit in 2012. The outcome of that audit: We asked them to tighten up their policy—they mean TO2015.

More recently, I contacted the board in light of the expenses that were brought to my attention, and I am going to further find ways to become more transparent and accountable. Today, I am happy to announce that, as a first step, they have agreed to start posting—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

#### TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** My question is for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure. Like many across the GTHA, my constituents are concerned with gridlock and rely on public transportation to get to and from work and school. Many in my great riding of Oak Ridges–Markham have reacted positively to the government's investments in our province's transportation system, which have eased their commute either through a more efficient GO service or improved highway infrastructure. However, they recognize that York region is one of the fastest-growing regional municipalities in all of Canada and, therefore, it faces unique challenges.

I would ask the minister what information he is able to provide to my constituents about other investments being made in public transit and transportation infrastructure in York region, especially in regard to the York region BRT.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Before I start, I want to acknowledge three people who have been really foundational to achieving this amazing expansion of transit: the member from Oak Ridges–Markham, my friend Dr. Jaczek; the other doctor, Dr. Moridi, the Minister of Research and Innovation—both of whom have been unrelenting champions for seeing the biggest build-out—and Mr. Bill Fisch, the chair of York region, who has been really critical.

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This is what we're doing: We have committed \$1.4 billion for the York Viva BRT project, part of our \$50-billion Big Move. This is being built now—the lines, the stations. If you've been on Highway 7, it is an amazing piece of infrastructure.

We have given another \$67.6 million, under the Metrolinx Quick Wins program for municipal capital, to help with bus acquisition, and \$7.3 million into Move-Ontario. This is creating 14,000 jobs in York region, and really increasing mobility. We're very proud of this project.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** It's certainly important to my constituents that transportation and transportation infrastructure remain a priority for this government. As we know, the subway going to Vaughan is eagerly awaited.

As you know, my great riding of Oak Ridges–Markham covers the largest geographical area in York region and includes four of the nine lower-tier municipalities. However, as I drive through my riding—which, because of its size, takes some time, I can certainly tell you—I notice how congested our highways can sometimes be. What I see with my own eyes reinforces the validity of my constituents' questions regarding easing congestion problems in the region.

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask the minister to please inform this House and my constituents in York region on what else our government has done to reduce congestion and the current status of its projects.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** We have a very competitive process over here. The member from Vaughan was heckling me that if I don't mention the subway and the 427 extension—I don't want the other member from York region to feel unloved.

That speaks to the totality of what is the single biggest build-out of transit across the GTHA in the history of the province. Why are we doing this, Mr. Speaker? Why have we been putting another \$634.7 million into York region since 2003? We're doing that because there's a cost, not just in the quality of life and families—dads and moms who are home another 40 or 50 minutes late from work. That's a precious price we don't want people to pay, because according the C.D. Howe Institute, this is costing us as much as \$11.5 billion in lost investment. That's fewer jobs.

The opposition likes to always ask, "What's the jobs strategy?" There are hundreds of thousands of jobs being created by the Big Move, and we are reducing the cost to business, creating more summer jobs for kids and accelerating employment. They can't support that because they have no economic development or jobs plan. This is a critical part of ours.

#### LAND USE PLANNING

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Minister, the town of Fort Erie has been on the receiving end of a lot of bad Liberal government decisions. You removed the slots from the racetrack, costing jobs and putting the racetrack in peril. You closed down the hospital ER. You closed down their tourism office. To their credit, the people of the town of Fort Erie want to persevere. If the government's not going to help them, they're going to help themselves. They have an industrial park development along the Queen Elizabeth Way to attract new jobs and businesses to a beautiful community with hard-working people. That project's been approved by the town of Fort Erie, by the region of Niagara. It's been appealed by you to the OMB, and the OMB decided in favour of the town of Fort Erie.

So, Minister, what I have to ask you is, why is the Liberal government standing in the way of economic development? Why are you kicking a town going through some tough times? Why don't you stand aside and let them bring good jobs and new businesses to Fort Erie?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I thank the leader for the question. Certainly, I wouldn't comment on a case that's before the Ontario Municipal Board, but we believe that the Ontario Municipal Board plays an important role in land use planning, and I think the community has worked hard to provide an economic development case for increased land use planning in that community. I would value your input as to the consultation that we are just about to begin with regard to how we can improve the process. We want to make sure that economic development and trade increase in Ontario. And we want to support communities, because we respect the municipal sector. We believe it's a strong order of government, and we want to support those decisions that are made by local government. So I look forward to your advice as to how we can improve the process for the Ontario Municipal Board.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Minister, I know the mayor has written to you. They met with your officials recently at AMO. If you respect local decision-making, then why won't you let this industrial park go forward so it can attract jobs?

Again, I'll reiterate: The town of Fort Erie supports it, and the region of Niagara supports it. The OMB decided in favour of this project. The only one standing against it is the Kathleen Wynne Liberal government, which wants to shut the town down. People in Fort Erie are asking, what the heck do you have against the town of Fort Erie? Why are you standing in the way?

We in the PC caucus, unlike the other two, look at every issue through the lens of what it does to create jobs. How will it grow the economy? How will it get good people back to work in the town of Fort Erie?

So Minister, I'll ask you the same question that Mayor Doug Martin has asked you: Why are you using tax dollars to shut down economic development in the town of Fort Erie? Let the jobs come.

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I thank the member for the question. Obviously, I don't know the specifics of why the decision was made at the Ontario Municipal Board. I'm happy to look into it. At the end of the day, I spent hours—days, in fact—dealing and speaking with mayors and reeves and councillors across Ontario in August because of the respect that we have for those elected officials.

I'm happy to work with you and find some solutions. That's our job. I feel confident that we can find a solution going forward. We want to ensure that all parts of Ontario get good land use planning advice, and we will work with you going forward.

#### HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Premier. For the second time in just over a year, workers at the Fort Erie racetrack got pink slips instead of assurances from this government, throwing families and local businesses in the Niagara region into turmoil yet again.



Fort Erie has already been hard hit by job losses, and people there can't take much more bad news. This government talks a good talk, but when will it pony up and provide stable, long-term funding for the horse racing industry instead of gambling with the economic future of Fort Erie and, frankly, all of rural Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the leader of the third party knows that we are working with all of the tracks in the province and that there is a report that is coming forward with a five-year strategy. We have already committed \$180 million to support the industry over the next three years. There was racing at all of the tracks in the province this season, and I'm pleased about that. I know that it is in the best interests of the people of the province—not just Fort Erie, but across the province—to have a sustainable horse racing industry. There are many jobs dependent on that industry.

There needed to be changes made. The SAR program was not transparent. The industry was fractured. There needed to be changes made. We are making those changes. We are moving to a sustainable horse racing industry, and \$180 million is in place for the transition over the next three years.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, all bets are off for the 117th season at Fort Erie Race Track when the last race is actually held on October 15. Not only does Canadian horse racing stand to lose a jewel in its triple crown, but those horse people and track workers stand to lose a whole lot more than the Prince of Wales Stakes. They stand to lose their livelihood.

When will this government stop hedging its bets and commit to sustainable funding for the Fort Erie Race Track and tracks in communities across the province so that horse people can plan for the future instead of preparing for the worst?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Well, compliments to the writer of the question for the horse racing lingo that was sprinkled throughout. That was very good.

The reason that I've asked the panel of John Snobelen, Elmer Buchanan and John Wilkinson to come forward with a five-year strategy is that we want that kind of stability. I want the horse racing industry to be part of the overall gaming strategy of the province.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Well, we've got to that point. The member from Northumberland—Quinte West is warned. The member from Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound is warned.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** You know, Mr. Speaker, there were questions earlier in the week about a particular lack of transparency at a track in the province, around the funding of the industry, and that's exactly the reason why the SAR program needed to be changed. So we need a five-year strategy that will have recommendations regarding the distribution of race dates, a revised governance structure that will include the role of the Ontario Racing Commission and the industry association and the integration—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

1130

## FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

**Mr. John Fraser:** Speaker, my question, through you is to the Minister of Education. Our government has made significant investments in full-day kindergarten to ensure that our youngest learners get the best possible start. In fact, we've invested over \$1.4 billion to support the implementation of full-day kindergarten to date.

In September of this year, McMaster, St. Marguerite d'Youville, Roberta Bondar and four other elementary schools in Ottawa South offered full-day kindergarten for the first time. There are now 25 schools providing full-day kindergarten in Ottawa South.

I've heard from the families that they are pleased with the progress we have made to date, but they want to know how their children are benefiting in the classroom from this investment. Mr. Speaker, will the minister please tell this House how full-day kindergarten is improving student success?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Thank you to the member from Ottawa South. His experience in his riding is the same throughout the province.

In fact, a few weeks ago, I was delighted to announce the early results of a study on full-day kindergarten. The study, which was conducted in partnership with Queen's and McMaster Universities, measured the progress of students who were enrolled in full-day kindergarten compared to those who participated in half-day programs. The results showed that students in full-day kindergarten are better prepared to enter grade 1 and will be more successful in school. In fact, students with two years of FDK were found to have significant improvement in social competence development, in language and cognitive development and in communication skills and general knowledge.

These findings show that we are giving our children a stronger start in life, and I look forward to the release later this fall of the whole research report.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John Fraser:** Thank you to the minister. I know that full-day kindergarten is popular with parents and with educators, and I'm pleased to hear about the study, which confirmed that full-day kindergarten is giving our kids the best possible start. In fact, education expert Charles Pascal says the study shows the program is truly a life-changer.

We know families are saving thousands of dollars with the introduction of full-day kindergarten for Ontario's four- and five-year-olds. I'm also hearing from parents, however, that full-day kindergarten is having an impact on child care supports in our community.

Can the minister tell the House how our government is assisting child care operators to ensure a seamless school day for all our kids?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** The member is absolutely correct: Full-day kindergarten is the most significant transformation that we've seen in early learning in decades.

But we know we are having an impact on the child care system. The gradual implementation of full-day kindergarten allows municipalities, child care operators and communities to adjust to the changes that this initiative brings, Speaker.

We are also providing funding to help transition child care centres to serve younger children. In addition, we're providing funding to help non-profit child care centres and school boards to support retrofits and renovations to serve younger children. The 2013 budget included an additional \$39 million to support child care modernization, bringing our total investment to \$346 million in additional investment over four years in our child care system.

#### GO TRANSIT

**Mr. Frank Klees:** My question is to the Minister of Infrastructure. I want to ask the minister about yet another questionable, if not fraudulent, activity at another one of the government's agencies. This time it involves GO Transit and its dealings with CN Rail.

In a confidential email to five of his colleagues, Mr. Daryl Barnett, who was CN's divisional manager for Ontario at the time, set out in great detail how CN would recover some \$385,000 of CN's overexpenditures from GO Transit. The plan included measures such as using partially worn tie plates and padding invoices. In the end, the email reads "Total exposure: Reduced from \$385 to \$78k."

My question to the Premier is this: Who at GO Transit was complicit in this scheme to fund taxpayer infrastructure dollars to CN to fund its—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Stop the clock.

I remind the member that he directed his question in his preamble to the Minister of Infrastructure, not the Premier.

Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I think CN, and I hope the member opposite—this is the second time we've heard these allegations. CN has put out a comprehensive report, as I understand, denying all of this and giving evidence. I will further—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Did you read it?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Halton will withdraw.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Really? Withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I hope the member has done his homework. I will certainly look at it.

I want to say one thing, Mr. Speaker, though, about that. This is the party that loves to trash GO Transit. Today, as you probably know, Mr. Speaker, GO Transit won the American Public Transportation Association—of which they are a member. This is the US best service

award for the best large public transportation system in North America. We're the best in North America, a Canadian—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Speaker, that's the same defensive rhetoric I heard from the Minister of Health when we first asked questions about Ornge in this place.

The email to which I'm referring from Mr. Barnett said this: "We have run into some unexpected over-expenditures to date and I would like to establish a strategy to mitigate or get out of as many as possible"—a strategy, Speaker, that I find it difficult to believe that people at GO Transit were not part of.

Would it surprise the minister to know that the same Daryl Barnett, who was the architect of that strategy, left as division engineer at CN in 2008 and within days was hired by GO Transit, and today that same individual is director of railway corridor infrastructure for GO Transit?

I would like to ask the minister this—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Question.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Will he defend what went on there or will he do what is right, order an investigation into what is going on at GO Transit and between GO Transit and CN and ensure that every step is taken to ensure—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You're not helping.

Minister.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the member opposite may know, we just went through an investigation where similar allegations were raised with CN. They turned out, after an extensive investigation—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, it turned out, after a very thorough investigation, that there was no validity to it, that the deals between CN and GO were not only above board but very valid and very fair.

If the member has any evidence at all, then he should table it with me and the ministry. As you know from earlier conversations today, we have no fear of opening up an investigation at all. We just completed one. We are not shy about transparency, and my Premier makes sure that I and every other minister aren't afraid. She supports us in inquiries, as we found out with the release today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I have no fear of—

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Newmarket–Aurora on a point of order.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Further to the minister's offer: We don't trust him, but we do want the Auditor General—



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's not a point of order. I—

*Interjections.*

**Interjection:** Easy on that desk.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** How's your hand?

On a lighter note, it's not my intention to always bring attention to the media, but there are two people in the press gallery celebrating birthdays on the same day, which is today: Richard Brennan and Martin Cohn. You have to guess who's older.

There are no deferred votes. This House is adjourned until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1139 to 1500.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** We are joined at Queen's Park today by a gentleman by the name of Frank Vismeg. He's a major figure and leader in the international tourism organization known as SKOL. He also is a major contributor to the tourism and hospitality industry in the community of Oakville and the region of Halton. Please welcome him to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** It's my pleasure to introduce two of my staff who are here in the gallery. My executive assistant recently joined my office, Najua Amin, who came from the member from Richmond Hill's office prior to; and also my legislative assistant, Andrea Ernesaks. They do outstanding work. They have the hardest job of all in this place: They make this member look good. Thank you very much.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I have to add an editorial. One of them was shaking their head no.

**Ms. Mitzie Hunter:** I'd like to introduce the delegation from my country of birth, Jamaica, here in the Legislature today. The delegation is made up of the Honourable Anthony Hylton, who is the Jamaican Minister of Industry, Investment and Commerce; Dr. Eric Deans, chairman of the Jamaica Logistics Task Force; and Mr. Seth Ramocan, who is the Jamaican consul general to Toronto.

They are here in the members' gallery today as my guests. I had the pleasure of meeting with them earlier today to talk about how Jamaica, Canada, and Ontario can expand trade relationships. Please welcome them.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Did Mitzie take you for a ride on the subway? Oh, it's not there.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I've never in my life since I've been here asked a member to stop heckling during introductions. Never, and I don't think I will.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### ONTARIO NORTHLAND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** The Minister of Northern Development and Mines told the northern media this week that the fire sale of Ontario Northland is "not an option

being considered nor has it ever been a remotely accurate representation...."

I have here a document received under the freedom of information act entitled, "ONTC Divestment Strategy." It states clearly that the mandate is: "To divest its assets and business units," and "To wind up and liquidate any assets and obligations which cannot be so divested."

The minister has been caught red-handed trying to rewrite history. I can appreciate why: Their announcement for the sale was because it would save \$265 million, but the government's own documents prove that a sale would cost up to \$790 million. That's a \$1-billion hole in the budget.

But you can't rewrite history. Instead of leaving 1,000 workers and their families in limbo for 18 months, afraid to make a car purchase or send the kids to college, the minister needs to end the fire sale today. The PC caucus has a constructive plan which will treat Ontario Northland as the economic infrastructure to create jobs and wealth. I would say this to the minister: Admit you got caught and, because you're out of ideas, simply take ours.

## LABOUR DISPUTE

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Today I rise in support of CUPE Local 4616 members, who are on strike in Bonfield in the riding of Nipissing. CUPE Local 4616 represents municipal employees. There are 16 of them on the picket line, half of them women, half of them men, some full-time, lots of them part-time, but all of them committed to providing top-notch, quality services to their municipality. They have been on strike since August 1, and if this is not bad enough, on September 10, five of them received letters of termination. They have been fired while they were on strike.

To make matters worse, the municipality is using temporary replacement workers. Let me tell you, Speaker, what a temporary replacement worker does to a community. It pits workers against workers. It pits neighbours against neighbours, members of the same family against one another. It tears the social fabric of the community. It leaves scars behind that will be there for generations to heal. I can see that in my own community, where temporary replacement workers were used.

What is going on right now in Bonfield is 100% preventable. All we need is for both sides to go back to the negotiation table.

There's a rally going on this weekend. I invite everyone to come and lend their support. It's in Bonfield on Saturday, October 5, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. There are buses coming from Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, Mississauga, Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury. Please join them.

## GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** Speaker, today marks a very important anniversary both for Ontario Liberals and for people across our province. Exactly 10 years ago today, we came together as Ontarians to choose change. Prior to

2003, our province had suffered years of mismanagement under the former PC government. We were tired of seeing our kids face overcrowded classrooms. We were frustrated seeing our front-line workers, like nurses, lose their jobs, and we were tired of hearing about hospitals closing and infrastructure funding that was being cut.

Poor leadership had left our province reeling, and we desperately needed to chart a more hopeful and prosperous course. We wanted to see our province succeed so that our children and their children after them could too. On this day 10 years ago that's what the people of Ontario chose. One decade later, we have greener, more dependable energy, the best schools in the English-speaking world and more investment in infrastructure and transit than ever before. We have faced hardships, but with persistence, we have overcome these and grown together, both as a province and as a government.

I want to thank former Premier Dalton McGuinty for his inspired leadership and stewardship during his tenure as our Premier. I want to thank all Liberal MPPs—many of whom still serve in this place—who were elected 10 years ago on this day. I want to also thank the staff and the volunteers who worked so hard to transform the Ontario Liberal Party into one of the most successful electoral machines in Canada. Speaker, I want to also thank our current Premier, Kathleen Wynne, for reaching out to every corner of Ontario to ensure that, as a party, we keep investing in our people, investing in infrastructure. Speaker—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** When I stand, you sit.

Members' statements.

### WIND TURBINES

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Once again, I want to share the concerns of Dufferin-Caledon residents regarding the impact industrial wind turbines are having in our communities.

Recently, the Liberals decided to start paying industrial wind turbine companies not to produce power due to oversupply in our energy system. Dufferin-Caledon residents are rightly asking, "Then why build them at all?" It is clear that the Liberals are putting the interests of industrial wind turbine companies ahead of the interests of taxpayers, and all Ontarians are paying the price on their energy bills.

Wind power is in oversupply, and the Liberal answer is to pay suppliers not to produce electricity while ignoring Ontario municipalities that have said no to industrial wind turbines. This Liberal approach to planning is ineffective, expensive and unsustainable. Their failure means that Ontarians are being gouged on their energy bills. Ad hoc policy changes are proving costly to consumers, and the plan to pay wind power producers to shut down energy production is another cost Ontarians cannot afford.

The PCs have asked for a full moratorium to be put in place to halt all development of industrial wind turbines until a comprehensive review is done.

I've heard from municipal leaders and residents in my riding who are frustrated that their voices are not being listened to. I will repeat what I've said before in this chamber: If the Premier truly believes in the willing-host approach, then she should be listening to the communities who are saying loud and clear, "We do not want industrial wind turbines."

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** I rise today to speak about a housing and wipe-out-poverty campaign forum that I hosted in my riding. Last Friday, I met with housing, community and social services groups, students from Brock University and some of my constituents living in poverty. We gathered in Welland to talk about the state of housing and poverty in Ontario and how we can work together to find solutions.

1510

We cannot afford to ignore the very real housing and poverty issues that are making life difficult for an ever-increasing amount of people in this province. One in 10 is working at minimum wage jobs; precarious employment has increased by nearly 53%; 45% of Ontario tenants pay more than 30% of their household income on shelter; and 11,082 people are on wait-lists in my riding—in Niagara. Those statistics are staggering.

We need safe, secure housing. It's the first step towards helping Ontarians living in poverty escape the cycle. We need to ensure that we're working with federal counterparts not only to maintain but to increase funding for affordable housing. We need to educate landlords and tenants on energy efficiency and programs available for retrofitting. Initiatives like inclusionary zoning and incentivizing construction of new affordable housing are real solutions.

The ideas that came out of this forum in my riding came to me as the NDP critic for housing and municipal affairs, and it's my job to listen and to raise these issues in the House.

### ISLAMIC HISTORY MONTH

**Mr. John Fraser:** October is Islamic History Month in Canada. First proclaimed in 2007, its purpose is to share the contributions of Muslims in Ontario, in Canada and around the world. Throughout history, Islamic civilization has contributed to the sciences, humanities, medicine, the arts and many other human endeavours.

Islamic History Month also celebrates the heritage of our Muslim communities. This past summer, I had the opportunity to visit many mosques in my riding of Ottawa South. I was also honoured to be a guest at a number of iftars during Ramadan. I found, in all those visits, a sense of community, the importance of family and a deep, abiding faith. Our Ontario is one Ontario, where diversity is our strength. Our Muslim community is part of our strength.

Today I am honoured to stand in this place and to recognize Islamic History Month. I want to extend my



best wishes to the many Muslims in my riding of Ottawa South who are organizing and participating in events this month, and I want to encourage all Ontarians to take the opportunity this month to learn more about the history and contributions of Muslims across this great province and in Canada.

#### COBOCONK AND DISTRICT LIONS CLUB

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Coboconk and District Lions Club, who have just celebrated their 60th charter anniversary. I had the privilege of being there this past weekend to meet with them again and congratulate them. They're certainly a group of members who are willing to help out anyone in the community.

Lions Clubs, of course, throughout Ontario have a long and proud tradition of servicing their communities, and the Coboconk Lions Club is no exception. Since it received its charter in 1953, the club has been comprised of men and women who go to great lengths to make sure their communities are some of the best to reside in. Throughout the past 60 years they've supported many projects in the community, from vision screening to soccer leagues to community care to individuals and, of course, their beloved Camp Kirk in Kirkfield, the camp for special-needs children.

Even though part of their own community was impacted in the recent flooding, they donated money to the Minden area flood victims as well as their own.

Most recently, the Coby Lions have completed a \$300,000 major revitalization to the local Lions Park, which includes a skateboard park, a fountain, an amphitheatre and stage, and there are many other beautiful construction projects there.

I wish them continued success in their communities. Thank you for making the communities better places to live.

#### MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** I rise today to speak of a great man who was born today, October 2, in 1869.

Now, there was nothing in the early years to suggest future greatness. He was actually a below-average student and painfully shy, a shyness that would lead to failure in his first career, as a lawyer. His first day as a trial lawyer was a disaster, because he refused to enter the courtroom, as he was terrified of having to speak in public. After failing at being a lawyer, he tried to be a teacher but failed at that as well.

Frustrated and disappointed at his failures, his family finally packed him off to South Africa in the hope that he'd make something of himself there.

Things didn't start out too great for him in South Africa. In his first week, he entered a railway compartment and sat in the first-class compartment with a fully paid-up first-class ticket. But a fellow traveller was

outraged at the idea that an Indian was sitting in a first-class compartment and asked him to leave. This shy man uncharacteristically stood up for himself and refused to leave. As a result, he was bodily picked up and thrown out of the compartment and onto the platform. From the ashes of this humiliation rose one of the greatest leaders of all time, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, also known as Mahatma Gandhi, the founder of modern India. Now, we know that his biggest legacy was freedom for India, but I think there is another legacy here, and that is a reminder that the meekest of us, the most afraid of us, can stand up for what we stand for, if only we can find true courage of conviction.

#### DECORUM IN CHAMBER

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Mr. Speaker, I think you might be interested in this particular statement. At a time when the tail is clearly wagging the dog in today's Ontario government, I would like to share with you a message through my statement, on behalf of members of the Huron-Bruce riding, specifically the Belmore-McIntosh community. It reads as follows:

"Through the voice of our MPP, Lisa Thompson, we are expressing concern that respect, integrity and courtesy have become the exception rather than the norm in Ontario's Legislative Assembly.

"The prevailing atmosphere of suspicion, cynicism and verbal attack creates a terrible and stressful workplace for you, and steadily erodes the public's trust and esteem for this body that governs our province.

"Typical behaviour inspires no confidence in the ethics or sound judgment of representatives.

"When facts are manipulated, credibility is lost and belief in our parliamentary system is impacted.

"Surely one of your priorities is to represent us as citizens of Ontario. We are sending you a strong, clear message that" you need to do better, because "we are dissatisfied with the current environment in this assembly.

"We are not asking you to be naive or avoid facing reality. But we are calling you to a higher standard.

"You, who have been entrusted with the awesome responsibility of governing our province, can surely govern yourselves in a manner that is respectful and worthy of respect.

"We are appealing to your better nature to do so."

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure you very much appreciate those words. Thank you.

#### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Anne Stokes):** Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr15, An Act respecting the Ontario Institute of Professional Agrologists.

Bill Pr18, An Act to revive Kingsgate II Limited.

Bill Pr19, An Act to revive Kingsgate III Limited.

Bill Pr20, An Act to revive Kingsgate IV Limited.

Bill Pr21, An Act to revive Westmount Ridge Associates Limited.

Bill Pr24, An Act to revive Senchura Holdings Ltd.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

*Report adopted.*

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### GO TRANSIT

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I rise in the House today to recognize the good work of GO Transit, a division of Metrolinx. Our very Canadian GO Transit has been honoured by the prestigious American Public Transportation Association, which many of you will know as the APTA, with its Outstanding Public Transportation System Achievement Award, competing against all other American, Canadian and Mexican transportation authorities.

APTA is comprised of more than 1,500 public and private organizations involved in buses, subways, commuter trains, paratransit, and both inter-city and high-speed passenger rail in the three countries. Awards are given each year to individuals and organizations that exemplify leadership and excellence and have made outstanding contributions to advancing public transit.

1520

GO Transit received its award at a ceremony during APTA's annual meeting yesterday. I want to take this opportunity to recognize GO Transit's importance to the millions of riders across the greater Toronto and Hamilton area.

GO carries, amazingly, over 65 million passengers a year in an extensive network of trains and bus services that spans more than 11,000 square kilometres. GO Transit's commitment to efficient and quality transit translates into 240 train trips and 2,414 bus trips each weekday, with over 250,000 boardings.

Since 2003, the government has invested more than \$7.7 billion in GO Transit. During that time, GO Transit has put new railcars and modern, accessible, more fuel-efficient buses that carry more passengers into service.

GO Transit continues to make significant progress in infrastructure improvements throughout its network, including upgrading rail corridors to offer more train trips and make commutes more efficient and reliable, upgrading stations to make transit more accessible, adding nearly 30,000 parking spots so more people can get on

the GO, and adding new storage and maintenance facilities to help improve train service.

GO's locomotive fleet has also expanded, with 57 new fuel-efficient MP40 locomotives. Another 28 new bi-level train cars purchased from Bombardier last April will be put into service starting in 2014.

This past summer, GO trains began running every 30 minutes during off-peak hours along the Lakeshore line, seven days a week. This has added 263 new train trips every week, giving commuters even more choice.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate GO Transit service and their 2,400 employees for receiving this prestigious award for moving millions of commuters efficiently and, very importantly, safely across the GTHA.

### VIOLENCE AGAINST ABORIGINAL WOMEN

**Hon. David Zimmer:** I rise in the Legislature today to deliver a joint statement with the minister responsible for women's issues about an issue that is devastating to First Nations, Métis and Inuit families. This is of concern to all of us in Ontario, and I speak of the issue of violence against aboriginal women.

The statistics are deeply troubling. Across Canada, the rate of violence against aboriginal women is triple that of non-aboriginal women. In some northern Ontario aboriginal communities, it is estimated that 75% to 90% of the women experience violence.

During the meeting of the Aboriginal Affairs Working Group in April, I heard a story that illustrates the magnitude of this issue. A woman passing through to the conference stopped off in Sault Ste. Marie to deliver a set of remarks to a women's group. In the women's group, there were 231 women. The speaker asked the non-aboriginal women to stand; 201 stood. She then said to the group of 201, "Please remain standing if you've experienced a missing or a murdered woman in your family," and only one woman remained standing; 200 sat down.

She then asked the aboriginal women in the room to stand; 30 stood. She said, "Please remain standing if you've experienced a murdered or a missing woman in your family," and only one woman sat down—only one woman sat down. That puts a human face to the statistics. This is a shocking example that illustrates the urgency to work together to end violence against aboriginal women.

On October 4, over 70 Sisters In Spirit vigils will be held across Ontario, including an event here in Toronto at Allan Gardens. Started by the Native Women's Association of Canada in 2006, the Sisters In Spirit movement is an opportunity for all of us to stand united to honour the lives of missing and murdered aboriginal women.

Violence against aboriginal women must stop, and collaboration amongst all ministries and community partners is critical to ending this violence.

Recognizing the importance of working together, our government established the Joint Working Group on



Violence Against Aboriginal Women in 2010 to provide direct advice on how best to tackle this issue. The group consists of 10 Ontario ministries, as well as the Ontario Native Women's Association, the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres, the Métis Nation of Ontario, the Independent First Nations and the Chiefs of Ontario. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of the partners for their hard work and support.

On September 29, I had the privilege of attending the annual general assembly of the Ontario Native Women's Association. It was an honour to spend time with its leadership and staff, who are helping to improve the lives of aboriginal women every day.

I want to briefly talk about just one example of how our government is supporting their important work. Talk4Healing is a free and culturally sensitive telephone help line available to aboriginal women in northern Ontario 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The service provides counselling and support to help aboriginal women who are experiencing violence and abuse. Traditionally, aboriginal women have turned to their grandmothers, mothers, sisters and aunts for support. The approach of Talk4Healing is to have trained aboriginal counsellors to help aboriginal women. Services are available in English, Cree, Ojibway and Oji-Cree. This important service is the first of its kind in Ontario and is proudly supported through funding from the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

The issues surrounding violence and aboriginal women are complex. Government will continue to work closely with our partners to end this violence and provide better support for victims; however, we do need the federal government to show leadership with us on this national issue. Ontario's position has been clear and consistent. We have repeatedly called on the federal government to work with the aboriginal national organizations to end violence against aboriginal women. This includes Premier Wynne joining her colleagues from the other provinces at the Council of the Federation meeting this past July to support a call for a national public inquiry into this issue. A national public inquiry would shed much-needed light on this issue. We need to learn from the past to make necessary changes and move forward.

Rural, urban, aboriginal or newcomer, we are all one in Ontario and this issue affects all of us. Ontario cannot be as fair and prosperous as we want it to be unless our most vulnerable citizens are able to live without fear or the threat of violence.

Earlier today, I asked for unanimous consent for all of us today in this chamber to wear the Sisters in Spirit pin to show our support for ending violence against aboriginal women. I'm very pleased that I have the pin on and I'm very pleased to see that all members of this Legislature are wearing this pin. It's a sign of support that all members of this Legislature are showing to end this tragedy.

Tomorrow, on October 4, I encourage all members and everyone across Ontario to attend a Sisters in Spirit

vigil in their community to honour the lives of more than 600 missing and/or murdered aboriginal women and girls in Canada, and demand action from the federal government on this issue. Meegwetich.

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** As the minister responsible for women's issues, I join with my colleague the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs today to remember and honour the lives of aboriginal women who are missing and murdered.

As the minister has noted, the high rate of violence against aboriginal women is extremely saddening and is of concern to me. My heart goes out to the families and communities that suffer when their daughters, sisters, wives, grandmothers are taken from them as victims of violence. The violence continues to damage far too many lives.

I acknowledge and commend the Native Women's Association of Canada for bringing more awareness to this issue with its Sisters in Spirit candlelight vigils taking place across Canada this Friday. The vigils, of course, honour the lives of missing and murdered aboriginal women and girls, support families and provide opportunities for healing.

The minister spoke earlier of the pins that we're wearing today. For those who are watching, you'll note that the pins are blue. You can't see this closely, but on them is Grandmother Moon. I'd just like to read the caption in terms of what the pin represents: "Grandmother Moon is a teaching about aboriginal women's special connection to our grandmothers who have passed into the spirit world. Grandmother Moon provides direction, strength, protection, knowledge and wisdom as women embrace their sacred place in our families, communities and beyond. She teaches us about our sacred role as life-givers" and the importance of being the heart of our nations.

1530

Mr. Speaker, I couldn't think of a better symbol for these vigils that will be taking place. We need to shine a light on this devastating issue, listen and learn, and take strong collective action to end this senseless violence.

Since being appointed minister responsible for women's issues and, frankly, even before I was minister, it has always been a priority to me that women in Ontario feel safe in their homes, in their communities or wherever they may be.

Findings from What Their Stories Tell Us research indicate that as of March 31, 2010, more than 580 women had either gone missing or were murdered. I would think that number is higher now, since that was 2010.

Since releasing our Domestic Violence Action Plan in 2004 and our Sexual Violence Action Plan in 2011, our government has been working with communities to raise awareness of violence against women and strengthen support for victims.

Violence against women has absolutely no place in Ontario but, sadly, our work must continue. The issues surrounding violence and aboriginal women are complex,

and there need to be solutions that are appropriate to their local culture and customs. The joint working group that the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs referenced is allowing our government to hear directly from those affected. This has helped us understand the problem and guide our response.

I also join with the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and the Premier in calling on the federal government for a national public inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women and girls in Canada. This is certainly an issue of national importance and one that we must all be working on together. This would be a very important step in the right direction.

We know there may be challenges that lie ahead. Our government is committed to working with our partners to bring awareness and lasting solutions to this very difficult issue. I'm optimistic that by continuing to work together we can end violence against aboriginal women and girls across our great province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Statements by ministries? Last call for statements by ministries.

It's now time for responses.

#### VIOLENCE AGAINST ABORIGINAL WOMEN

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** As the PC critic for women's issues, I'm pleased to rise today on behalf of Tim Hudak and the PC caucus and, of course, our critic for aboriginal affairs, from Parry Sound-Muskoka, on this day to remember and honour the lives of aboriginal women who are missing or murdered.

Violence against women is a serious issue faced by too many women and girls in our province. Despite the many programs and policies in place that have been created to address this problem, women and girls continue to face violence in their homes and their communities.

For aboriginal women and girls, the threat of violence is even more severe. Aboriginal women are almost three times more likely than non-aboriginal women to be the victims of violence. That's three times more likely to experience physical assault, sexual assault or robbery, either by a stranger or someone at home.

Young aboriginal women and girls between the ages of 15 and 34 are especially likely to have experienced violence, with almost two thirds of female aboriginal victims falling into this age group. Furthermore, aboriginal women represent a disproportionately high number of female homicide victims in Canada.

In the 2011 report, the federal Standing Committee on the Status of Women identified poverty as being both the primary cause and effect of violence against aboriginal women and girls.

Aboriginal women experience higher rates of unemployment and tend to have lower incomes than non-aboriginal women and aboriginal men. A lack of economic security can prevent aboriginal women and girls from escaping violent situations.

Clearly, the issue of violence against aboriginal women and girls is not one that we can easily solve. However, we cannot allow this trend to continue.

I'd like to commend the organizations that provide vital resources and assistance for aboriginal women and girls who are or have been the victims of violence. We want to thank the Native Women's Association of Canada, as has been mentioned, for the lovely pin that was brought to us, and to encourage members to attend on October 4, if they have ceremonies in their ridings, the Sisters in Spirit vigil.

There is a great deal of support both inside this Legislature, outside this Legislature and all over the province to fight to solve these problems of violence against women in the aboriginal communities. So I'm pleased to have had the opportunity to speak today, Mr. Speaker, on this important issue.

#### GO TRANSIT

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** As the PC Party transportation critic, and on behalf of my leader, Tim Hudak, I'd like to echo the Minister of Transportation's remarks and congratulate GO Transit on receiving the Outstanding Public Transportation System Achievement Award.

As my colleague mentioned, GO carries 65 million passengers every year and operates a complex network of trains and buses that spans over 11,000 kilometres.

The American Public Transportation Association's decision to recognize GO Transit with this award is a testament to the hard-working, dedicated front-line staff. They are the ones working every day to ensure we get to work on time and back home to our families in the evening.

GO Transit is an important piece of the overall transportation puzzle in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area, and the proper assembly of this puzzle is crucial, as the implications of inaction are widespread. Congestion leads to health concerns, longer commute times, and current estimates peg the cost of gridlock at \$6 billion a year in the GTA alone.

Ontario is a great place to live, and as we grow, particularly in the GTA, this gridlock problem will only become larger. As public transit is the best way to move cars off the road, we look more to our dedicated front-line public transit workers, like those at GO Transit, to help keep the GTA moving.

Certainly efforts are being made to expand the capacity of our public transit networks. This summer, I was pleased to see that a year and a half after they rejected a PC motion to build subways to Scarborough, the government has come around and is supportive of building this important transit line. I would also like to commend federal finance minister Jim Flaherty and Toronto mayor Rob Ford for working out a deal to deliver federal funds to help finance this initiative.

Working together, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to tackling the problem of gridlock in the GTHA, and I again want to congratulate GO Transit on their award.



## GO TRANSIT

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I too join the minister in congratulating GO Transit for receiving this prestigious award. I want to thank the men and women who work for GO Transit because they are capable of great work, and they demonstrate that they do great work.

But I want to take this opportunity—because GO Transit is a division of Metrolinx—to outline some of my concerns around Metrolinx, because I don't get that many opportunities. The problem that we have is that we need to have a Metrolinx that is independent, consistent, one that shows leadership and one that is neutral or at least appears to be neutral, and I worry that they haven't shown that kind of leadership.

I want to talk about how I see that. So Toronto council a while back says, "We want LRTs," and Metrolinx says, "Okay." We have a new mayor who comes in and says, "I don't like LRTs; I like subways," and Metrolinx says, "Okay, we don't mind that either." And then you've got city council that tells the mayor, "We don't like your idea; we like LRTs," and Metrolinx says, "Okay." And then city council changes its mind and says, "We want a subway, not the LRTs," and Metrolinx says, "Okay. If that's okay with you, it's okay with us as well." You see the problem we've got.

Now, I understand that city council can vacillate back and forth, but we can't have Metrolinx vacillating back and forth. We need to have a Metrolinx that is clear about its role, because they're going to have to raise \$50 billion in the next 20 years, and we need someone who has the vision and the leadership to say, "This is what we need."

To make it worse, Speaker, the TTC and city council say that the subway replacing the Scarborough RT should run along McCowan Road to Sheppard. Then the minister comes in and says, "I don't like that plan. I've got a different plan," because he wants to embarrass the council and probably the federal government, and he wants to run it along the Scarborough RT corridor. And what happens? Metrolinx, surprisingly, says—particularly, Rob Prichard declares that Metrolinx likes Murray's option based on an early analysis. You understand what I'm getting at. They cannot be so easily politically influenced. We need them to show leadership, consistency and independence. Until they do that, we can't trust their work.

1540

VIOLENCE AGAINST  
ABORIGINAL WOMEN

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I rise today to speak for those who have no voice. Through violence, drug abuse, prostitution and other factors, missing and murdered aboriginal women do not have the opportunity to speak out about the crimes they have been victims of.

Violence of any kind is a deplorable and unforgivable act. When a single identifiable group of individuals finds itself three and a half times more likely to be on the

receiving end of those violent acts, it is a tragedy that is so indescribable that it boggles the mind to even think about it. In the last decade, there have been more than 580 Inuit, Métis and First Nations women who have lost their lives across Canada. Countless more have vanished, never to be seen or heard from again, and that does not include those who have lived through violence, suffered at the hands of others and were degraded of the dignity they should be afforded.

There are no words to describe the sorrow and pain these acts have caused. While largely forgotten by much of society, these mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts and grandmothers remain painful memories for their families—scars that will not heal until we, as a society, commit to finding an answer. Despite an acknowledgement that there is a problem, governments have been slow to act, refusing to admit that there is real action that can be taken to prevent these horrible acts from being repeated.

We may not be able to prevent every single act of violence from happening, but there are steps that can and should be taken. Committing to ending poverty on reserves, developing safe and adequate housing strategies, taking steps to fight substance abuse and providing all First Nations people with the dignified life they deserve are a few of the actions we can take to address the problem.

This is not a political issue. This is a human rights issue, and I urge everyone listening today to join the fight to stop violence against aboriginal women and children and allow the healing process to begin.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their comments. It is now time for petitions.

## PETITIONS

## ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the government of Ontario's newly created Ontario College of Trades is planning to hit hard-working tradespeople with membership fees that, if the college has its way, will add up to \$84 million a year; and

"Whereas the Ontario College of Trades has no clear benefit and no accountability as tradespeople already pay for licences and countless other fees to government; and

"Whereas Ontario has struggled for years to attract people to skilled trades and the planned tax grab will kill jobs, and drive people out of trades;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To stop the job-killing trades tax and shut down the Ontario College of Trades immediately."

I support this petition, affix my name and send it down to the table with Jasper.

## TAXATION

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the cost of living in northwestern Ontario is significantly higher than other regions of the province due to the high cost of necessities such as hydro, home heating fuel, gasoline and auto insurance; and

“Whereas an increase in the price of any of these essential goods will make it even more difficult for people living in northwestern Ontario to pay their bills and put food on the table;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To reject any proposed increase to the harmonized sales tax, gas tax or any other fees or taxes in the northwest; and instead investigate other means such as increasing corporate tax compliance or eliminating corporate tax loopholes in order to fund transit in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area.”

I support this, will affix my signature and give it to page James to deliver to the table.

## AIR QUALITY

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I want to thank Mr. Larry Moore of Tottenham for sending me this Drive Clean petition.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s Drive Clean program was implemented only as a temporary measure to reduce high levels of vehicle emissions and smog; and

“Whereas vehicle emissions have declined so significantly from 1998 to 2010 that they are no longer among the major domestic contributors of smog in Ontario; and

“Whereas the overwhelming majority of reductions in vehicle emissions were, in fact, the result of factors other than the Drive Clean program, such as tighter manufacturing standards for emission-control technologies; and

“Whereas from 1999 to 2010 the percentage of vehicles that failed emissions testing under the Drive Clean program steadily declined from 16% to 5%; and

“Whereas the environment minister has ignored advances in technology and introduced a new, computerized emissions test that is less reliable and prone to error; and

“Whereas the new Drive Clean test no longer assesses tailpipe emissions, but instead scans the on-board diagnostics systems of vehicles, which already perform a series of continuous and periodic emissions checks; and

“Whereas the new Drive Clean test has caused the failure rate to double in less than two months as a result of technical problems with the new emissions testing method; and

“Whereas this new emissions test has caused numerous false ‘fails’, which have resulted in the overcharging of testing fees for Ontario drivers and car dealerships, thereby causing unwarranted economic hardship and stress;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

“That the Minister of the Environment must take immediate steps to begin phasing out the Drive Clean program.”

Mr. Speaker, I agree with this petition and will sign it.

## ONTARIO MUNICIPAL BOARD

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** “A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario Municipal Board is a provincial agency composed of unelected members unaccountable to Ontarians; and

“Whereas the Ontario Municipal Board has the power to unilaterally alter local development decisions made by municipalities and their communities; and

“Whereas the city of Toronto is the largest city in Ontario; and

“Whereas the city of Toronto has a planning department composed of professional planners, an extensive legal department and 44 full-time city councillors directly elected by its citizens; and

“Whereas Toronto’s city council voted overwhelmingly in February 2012 to request an exemption from the Ontario Municipal Board’s jurisdiction;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to recognize the ability of the city of Toronto to handle its own urban planning and development; and

“Further, that the Ontario Municipal Board no longer have jurisdiction over the city of Toronto.”

I, along with thousands, am going to sign this petition and give it to Ravicha and have her deliver it to the table.

## PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

**Mr. John O’Toole:** I’m pleased to present a petition from the riding of Durham which reads as follows:

“Whereas the Ministry of Health is planning on eliminating OHIP-funded physiotherapy services currently provided to seniors in retirement homes—and changing the current provider of the service as of August 1st, 2013”—so it’s already done; “and

“Whereas the Minister of Health has announced a total of \$33 million in physiotherapy funding, or \$550 per senior for 60,000 seniors, including those in retirement homes; and

“Whereas instead of the 100 to 150 visits per year a senior may receive now” from the dedicated OHIP-funded staff, “the change would mean a CCAC therapist would provide 5 to 10 visits on-site only to seniors who are bedridden or have an acute injury. All other ambulatory seniors would have to attend other community locations/clinics for physiotherapy and exercise off-site; and

“Whereas this change not only reduces the amount of money available, but also moves funds from the lowest-cost provider (OHIP physiotherapy providers—\$12.20



per treatment) to the highest-cost provider (CCAC—\$120 per treatment); and

“Whereas current OHIP physiotherapy providers, who have been providing seniors with individualized treatments for over 48 years, will be delisted from OHIP by the government; and

“Whereas these services have been proven to help seniors improve in their activities of daily living, mobility, pain and fall risks;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To review and reverse the decision to eliminate OHIP physiotherapy services to seniors in retirement homes, our most vulnerable population and most at risk for falls; and continue with the provision of at least 100 treatments per year with a mechanism to access an additional 50 treatments, if ... necessary, with the current low-cost OHIP physiotherapy providers.”

I'm pleased to sign and support this and present it to Megan.

#### HYDRO RATES

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas home heating and electricity are essential utilities for northern families;

“Whereas the government has a duty and an obligation to ensure that essential goods and services are affordable for all families living in the north and across the province;

“Whereas government policy such as the Green Energy Act, the harmonized sales tax, cancellation of gas plants in Oakville and Mississauga have caused the price of electricity to artificially increase to the point it is no longer affordable for families or small business;

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“Whereas electricity generated and used in north-western Ontario is among the cleanest and cheapest to produce in Canada, yet has been inflated by government policy;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To take immediate steps to reduce the price of electricity in the northwest and ensure that residents and businesses have access to energy that properly reflects the price of local generation.”

I support this, will affix my signature and give it to page James to deliver to the table.

#### TIRE DISPOSAL

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I have a petition for the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and I want to thank my friend Ken Dillabough from Kal Tire, formerly Protyre, in Renfrew, for forwarding this petition to us.

“Whereas the Ontario government has approved massive increases to Ontario Tire Stewardship's eco fees

for agricultural tires, increasing some fees from \$15.29 to \$352.80, \$546.84 or \$1,311.24; and

“Whereas Ontario imposes tire eco fees that are dramatically higher than those in other provinces; and

“Whereas other provincial governments either exempt agricultural tires from recycling programs or charge fees only up to \$75; and

“Whereas these new fees will result in increased costs for our farmers and lost sales for our farm equipment dealerships; and

“Whereas the PC caucus has proposed a new plan that holds manufacturers and importers of tires responsible for recycling, but gives them the freedom to work with other businesses to find the best way possible to carry out that responsibility;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To suspend the decision to significantly increase Ontario Tire Stewardship's fees on agricultural and off-the-road tires pending a thorough impact study and implementation of proposals to lower costs.”

I support this petition, affix my signature and send it down with the fine page from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, Bridget.

#### AIR-RAIL LINK

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas diesel trains are a health hazard for people who live near them;

“Whereas more toxic fumes will be created by the 400 daily trains than the car trips they are meant to replace;

“Whereas the planned air-rail link does not serve the communities through which it passes and will be priced beyond the reach of most commuters;

“Whereas all major cities in the world with train service between their downtown core and the airport use electric trains;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the province of Ontario stop building the air-rail link for diesel and move to electrify the route immediately;

“That the air-rail link be designed, operated and priced as an affordable transportation option between all points along its route.”

I join with most of the people in my riding in signing this, and I'm going to give it to Ravicha to be delivered to the table.

#### HEALTH INSURANCE

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontarians who require emergency in-patient hospital services while out-of-country are eligible to receive a reimbursement of up to a maximum of \$400 for complex hospital care, and \$200 for less intensive

medical care, and \$50 for outpatient care other than dialysis treatment; and

"Whereas in the 2004 provincial budget speech the Minister of Finance for Ontario stated it costs an average of \$851 per day to be in an Ontario hospital; and

"Whereas with a maximum out-of-country reimbursement rate of \$400 this is a clear violation of the portability principle of the Canada Health Act;

"We, the undersigned"—there are about 22 pages here, Speaker—"do hereby petition the government of Ontario to abide by the portability principle of the Canada Health Act and raise out-of-country emergency reimbursement rates to equal those of health services in Ontario."

I agree with this petition, will sign my name to it and give it to page Gabrielle.

### COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre is recognized as one of the leading primary care providers in northwestern Ontario, providing essential services to those living in not only Ignace, but across northwestern Ontario; and

"Whereas a 2010 rent increase by the government of Ontario has threatened the long-term viability of the health centre's operations; and

"Whereas the rent being charged to the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre is much higher than rent being charged to similar operations in other communities and far surpasses 'market rent' for a small community in northwestern Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately rectify the situation and ensure the long-term viability of the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre by either reducing rent, transferring ownership of the building to the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre, or through capital funds to build a new facility that better suits the community's needs."

I support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Peyton to deliver to the table.

### LYME DISEASE

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the tick-borne illness known as chronic Lyme disease, which mimics many catastrophic illnesses such as multiple sclerosis, Crohn's, Alzheimer's, arthritic diabetes, depression, chronic fatigue and fibromyalgia, is increasingly endemic in Canada, but scientifically validated diagnostic tests and treatment choices are currently not available in Ontario, forcing patients to seek these in the USA and Europe; and

"Whereas the Canadian Medical Association informed the public, governments and the medical profession in the

May 30, 2000, edition of their professional journal that Lyme disease is endemic throughout Canada, particularly in southern Ontario; and

"Whereas the Ontario public health system and the Ontario health insurance plan currently do not fund those specific tests that accurately serve the process of establishing a clinical diagnosis, but only recognize testing procedures known in the medical literature to provide false negatives at 45% to 95% of the time;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to request the Minister of Health to direct that the Ontario public health system and OHIP include all currently available and scientifically verified tests for acute and chronic Lyme diagnosis, to do everything necessary to create public awareness of Lyme disease in Ontario, and to have internationally developed diagnostic and successful treatment protocols available to patients and physicians."

These petitions continue to come in, Mr. Speaker. I agree with them, affix my signature and send them to the table with Megan.

### DOG OWNERSHIP

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas aggressive dogs are found among all breeds and mixed breeds; and

"Whereas breed-specific legislation has been shown to be an expensive and ineffective approach to dog bite prevention; and

"Whereas problem dog owners are best dealt with through education, training and legislation encouraging responsible behaviour;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To repeal the breed-specific sections of the Dog Owners' Liability Act (2005) and any related acts, and to instead implement legislation that encourages responsible ownership of all dog breeds and types."

I couldn't agree more. I'm going to sign it and give it to Daniel to be delivered to the table.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### TIME ALLOCATION

**Hon. John Milloy:** I wish to call government notice of motion number 23, please.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Mr. Milloy has moved government motion number 23.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, I move that, pursuant to standing order 47 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House, when the order of the day is next called for resuming the adjourned debate on government order number 8, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the main mo-



tion and any amendments thereto, which questions shall be decided without further amendment or debate; and

That, except in the case of a recorded division arising from morning orders of the day, pursuant to standing order 9(c), no deferral of any vote shall be permitted; and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on government order number 8, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I guess I jumped the gun there. Mr. Milloy has moved government motion number 23.

Once again, Mr. Milloy.

**Hon. John Milloy:** May I enter into debate at this point, Speaker?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Yes, you may.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Thank you very much. I'm not going to spend a lot of time speaking on this today, and I kind of give informal notice to the Legislature that you won't see a lot of Liberal members standing up on this. That's because what we're dealing with today is a procedural matter. It relates to eight very important bills that are before this Legislature, as well as a motion to form a Select Committee on Developmental Services. All of those are very, very important matters, deserving of attention by this Legislature, deserving of debate and discussion in committees, where appropriate, here on the floor of the Legislature, votes etc.

But what we're talking about today is actually a programming motion that was introduced several days ago, which outlined a process by which the Legislature, both here and in the committee process, would deal with these eight bills and also deal with this developmental services committee. This programming motion was put forward. It follows the same spirit as other programming motions that have been dealt with by the Legislature. It merely outlines the schedule and provides a certainty and an assurance—not in the passage of any of these bills; I want to stress that—but in the fact that they will be dealt with through the regular course of discussion here in the Legislature and that they will receive the attention they deserve.

1600

I think there's a consensus that these bills are important bills where we need to have that debate and that assurance. We've unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, as I think you're aware, seen incidents here in this Legislature where bills have been held up and debate has dragged on. We haven't had that certainty. That's what the programming motion does.

The programming motion has had six and a half hours' debate. That was reached late yesterday afternoon. We had 19 members who spoke on the main motion as well as an amendment that was put forward by the New Democratic Party. Having had six and a half hours of debate on, as I say, an administrative matter or a procedural matter, not one that deals with the substance of any of these bills or, indeed, the committee that I referenced, we feel it's time to simply hold the vote on it.

Let's have the vote on the programming motion. What I have introduced here is time allocation, which allows the Legislature to decide, through a vote, whether they wish to then proceed to the programming motion.

As I say, Mr. Speaker, it's a procedural matter. This is about moving ahead on these eight bills. Some people, in the course of question period and debates and discussion, have talked about "ramming"—that this rams legislation through. I think there is a bit of confusion, Mr. Speaker, when the opposition has unfortunately used this language. This is not about ramming anything through. All the bills that are outlined will be subject—each one is at a slightly different stage of the legislative process, but they will be subject to debate. They will be subject to discussion. In many cases, if they've gone to committee or are going to committees, there will be public hearings and there will be opportunities for all sorts of input, and ultimately there will be opportunities for votes that will be held here in the Legislature.

So again, Mr. Speaker, although we're talking about some very important issues, this piece of it is about the procedure. This piece of it is about making sure that it's dealt with in a timely fashion. That's why, after 19 speakers, after six and a half hours of debate, the government side of the House says: Let's get on with it. Let's have a time allocation motion, and then we can proceed with the programming motion and then we can get to these very, very important matters.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I normally say, "It's a pleasure to stand and speak to this motion today." But actually, I'm deeply troubled that I'm speaking to this motion today, because it was not our intention to speak very much to this motion today.

We had a deal with the government. My leader yesterday talked to the Premier about what it feels like for people across this province when a government, and particularly a Premier, reneges on a deal. We had a deal with the government on this programming motion because my leader, Tim Hudak, met with the Premier, and they said, "Let's clear the decks." There are a lot of pieces of legislation we feel pretty close on. We even have an agreement with my friend the member from Trinity-Spadina on some of these things.

We think we can move ahead, get the agenda of the Legislature advanced and then perhaps the Premier is going to move on an economic agenda. We found out, when she had her little tête-à-tête in Hamilton on the weekend, that she wants to talk more. She has talked for nine months, and what she has realized after that is that she would really like to talk more. She has enjoyed talking so much for nine months that she wants to talk more.

But you see, we had a deal on this programming motion.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Some deal.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It included a bill that, yes, I understand that the New Democrats did not support—Bill

74. They called it the EllisDon bill; that's not actually what it's called. It's a bill, as the Premier said repeatedly in this House, to solve and remedy an anomalous situation that has existed since 1958. It made perfect sense. There was an unequal playing field with regard to one particular significant employer and engineering construction company in this province that needed to be corrected. Well, you know what happened? And there were people supportive of this bill. The Carpenters' District Council of 20,000 members was very supportive of it. LIUNA, combined labour union, 75 members—in fact, the member for Essex was a former director of training there. So there was broad support for that bill among unionized and non-unionized organizations as well.

But the NDP didn't support it because they saw this as an opportunity to maybe get in tighter with some of those people that they thought the Liberals might be ticking off, you know, with Bill 74.

But what really happened was that the Liberals—the Premier, Kathleen Wynne, got a call. She got a call and some people might say—you ever wake up in the middle of the night in a sweat and you think that you've got a call? And I mean you've got a call. Well, the Premier got a call from a higher power as well: Pat Dillon, the highest power in Ontario today—Pat Dillon. They might as well make him emperor, king, czar and pope all in one. Because that's what you've got with Pat Dillon.

You know, he used to pull the strings of Dalton McGuinty. Kathleen Wynne said she was going to be different: "I'm going to be a principled Premier." A principled Premier is what she was going to be. "And I'm going to govern for the people." Well, she governs for one person; that's Pat. Pat Dillon runs the College of Trades. He runs everything. Pat Dillon tells who to appoint on boards, tells the Premier pretty much what to do. She covered when he made the call. You know, Dalton McGuinty used to call himself the education Premier. Kathleen Wynne will be known as the jellyfish Premier, because when she had an opportunity to stand on what she said was principle to end an anomalous situation that was affecting one company in this province, she stated in this House repeatedly—and I have it in Hansard—how she was going to put this bill through, Bill 74, because that situation had to be corrected. And one call from P.D., Pat Dillon, and it was all over—all over: This morning she gets up in the House and says, "Oh, the court decision now renders Bill 74 unnecessary." Well, holy jumpin'. I guess this is going to be one of those decisions that doesn't get appealed, eh? Good luck with that one, folks. So if this decision gets appealed, we could be right back where we were before. A single court decision and she thinks the world has changed? No, it means that one court believes that the Ontario Labour Relations Board ruling was wrong, was incorrect. But there are higher courts and you have the right to appeal to those higher courts.

You know what Kathleen Wynne is good at, though? She's pretty good at math, because she started to look at

the Working Families Coalition of which Pat Dillon is the czar as well. She said, "Oh, my goodness, they spent that much money to demonize Tim Hudak? Are you serious? They spent that much money?" Consequently, my friend from Chatham—Kent—Essex, Mr. Rick Nicholls, has Bill 101, a good bill, before this chamber tomorrow. It's not like that Bill 101 that they had in Quebec years ago; no, this is a different Bill 101. This is a real good Bill 101.

1610

This would do something that every fair-minded person in the world could not possibly argue against. It would take third parties that have special interests at heart and say, "You cannot spend excessive amounts of money during a writ period for a provincial election." They've done it in other provinces. They limit it to a few pesos in some provinces. Even at the federal level across this great country of Canada, from sea to shining sea, you're only allowed to spend \$150,000 in a writ period. Do you know what the Working Families spent in the last election period? Estimates range anywhere from about \$4 million to about \$10 million. Who benefited by the Working Families spending that money? Well, it was the Liberal government, who got re-elected. Oh, the Working Families did not do anything to try to help me get re-elected, I can assure you. In fact, they did not try to help any one member of the PC Party get elected. In fact, they worked diligently against us. They tried to demonize each and every one of us.

My friend Rick Nicholls' bill would put a stop to that. Not that they would try to promote us; it's just that they would stop special interests who sit across the table one day spending money and agreeing to spend money to defeat the Conservatives, and then after the election sit across the table with that same government on the bargaining side saying, "Well, don't forget us here now. We need a little bit of a quid pro quo for all that help we gave you in defeating the Tories in the last election." My colleague's bill would even that playing field.

I was saddened today. I thought that maybe things would have changed. You see, what I said today, and I'll repeat it now: On the menu for tomorrow's lunch will be a bowl of Liberal principle soup. In that bowl of soup will be everything you want to know about the Liberals' principles. You see, that soup will also be served on Friday, but it will have a totally different mix of vegetables and grains and meats in it on Friday because, you see, Liberal principles are just "whatever benefits us today." If the need changes on Friday, that soup will have something else in it.

You know, I am proud to say today that I'm a Progressive Conservative, because I will stand on principles. They are not for sale. They cannot change overnight because somebody doesn't like what I was saying yesterday and they say, "Well, if you want to get elected"—I have people come into my office all the time and say to me, "Well, you're going to do this or I'm going to work against you in the next election." Do you know what I say to them? "Have at 'er. Have at 'er. You want to work



against me? Go right ahead. But I will stand on what I believe is right."

What we saw today, the turtling, the literal collapse of Kathleen Wynne as Premier under the pressure of the Dillon headlock—you know, he got her in one of those, and he said, "You're not supporting Bill 74. That's going to get pulled."

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** What have you got against headlocks?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Timmins—James Bay.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** But he has got something against headlocks.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member didn't hear me.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Anyway, we're in a sorry state. We're in a sorry state in this province when one man has the power, the money and the influence to put someone in the Premier's seat, and then that Premier will pretty much sell their soul to the devil to do whatever that person does. That's wrong. That's not the way our system was designed. Our forefathers would not agree with it. They would not agree with it.

There are supposed to be some real ethics in politics. When every member comes to this chamber, I believe they come with the belief that they have some principles and that they're going to put those in practice to make lives better for people. When you sell your soul to the devil—and that's what you're doing when you're getting Pat Dillon involved—you have crossed the line.

So, once again, over and over again, we have seen evidence from this government where they will do—they are just puppets, and Pat is pulling the strings. That is wrong. I hope he comes after me in my riding; I'd love to take him on.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I always enjoy listening to my good friend from Renfrew-Nipissing. Is that the riding?

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Pembroke. I never get ridings right. He's always colourful, if anything.

I just want to pick up on a couple of things that he said before I get to my comments, and I want to leave some time for my colleagues. He's right: The Liberal Party does have principles. The problem is, if you don't like this one, they've got a dozen more to give you tomorrow. That has been the case, and it was my good friend Mr. Prue who pointed that out to me. I thought that was a really interesting point, because, in this particular case, it's pretty clear that the principles of the Liberal Party have been somewhat confused. On the one hand, "Oh, we want to help EllisDon, that poor employer who needs all our help. What can we do to help them?" And on the other hand, they say, "Oh, Pat and the building trades, we want to help you, too." So they were somewhat conflicted through this entire process.

I just have to say that I'm proud to be part of a caucus, under Andrea Horwath's leadership, who said, "This is

wrong." You don't have a piece of legislation that treats one employer differently than every other employer in the province of Ontario.

What we're essentially doing, should Bill 74 pass, is to say EllisDon will get a treatment that is different than other employers in the province of Ontario. We don't think that's right. If there's a law that applies to people, it should be equally applied to those persons, or those companies, equally across the province. We don't think, quite frankly, this is a precedent that is a good one to follow.

The second thing is—and I am only saying this, Speaker, because I've read this in IQP, Inside Queen's Park, Mr. Graham Murray's column. I've read it in the Star under Richard Brennan. I've read it also in a couple of other articles. It is rumoured to be said that this is being done because the Conservatives were trying to increase the contributions to the Conservative Party. They saw this as an opportunity to get more support from EllisDon.

On the other hand, it's also reported that the Liberals obviously want to hang on to those particular contributions that they've long got. I think that's reprehensible. I think, in the end—yes, Speaker?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I would caution the member from Timmins—James Bay about imputing motive—the motive there is kind of coming through. You're on the edge, so kind of cut it back, please.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Okay. Thank you, Speaker. I take that point. I was trying to get as close to the edge, making the point without going over. I appreciate your guidance.

But it was clear there was some motivation in all of this, and I think that is one of the things that will be the test with the public at one point: How do we view political parties who have that type of motivation and put themselves in a position that, quite frankly, we, as New Democrats, don't think is right? So I just say that is one of the realities.

The other thing I just want to say is that I really was intrigued by the approach that the member took in regard to Mr. Patrick Dillon. I've known Mr. Dillon for years. I've worked with him on all kinds of different files and issues. I know him to be a solid Liberal supporter over these years; that's fine. Everybody can pick the political party that they wish to choose. I think he's misguided. I think that, quite frankly, if I were him, I would not be supporting the Liberal Party. But I thought, if Pat Dillon decides to run again next year—because I understand he may not be running. I don't know if that's the case, but the election will be sometime in the spring. What I would do if I were him, I would take Mr. Yakabuski's speech and I would plaster it all over the convention, because it's the largest endorsement that you could have given Mr. Pat Dillon for re-election in the building trades.

So I just want to say, I think you're trying to get into cahoots with the building trades in support of Pat Dillon by giving him this endorsement that he will be able to use should he decide to run again and say, "Listen, the reason

you have to vote for me: Look what Mr. Yakabooski had to say about me and the power I get.”

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Buski. It's Yakabuski.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I got the name wrong, and I apologize.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I never call you “Bison.”

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Well, no. Listen, me and my buffalo relatives resemble that.

But I just say it would be passing strange to see this situation where you have somebody in the building trades running with an endorsement from the Conservative caucus. I just thought that was rather interesting.

The other thing I want to say before I get to the time allocation—I'll close on that particular point—is that it was interesting today that the Minister of Municipal Affairs, at question period, hid behind the fact that there was an item before the courts—for her to be able to make any decision.

1620

This is one of the points that we have been saying about this debate right from the beginning: How, on the one hand, could the government say, “Oh, this matter is before the courts, so we cannot comment” when it comes to denying kids the ability to get intensive behavioural therapy if they happen to be autistic—how do you hide behind the courts on a whole bunch of other matters? When government decides it does not want to move on a particular issue, it's convenient to say, “I will hide behind the courts.”

This thing has been before the courts for a long period of time, and the government lickety-split decided to play this game, according to the IQP report, that they would support a Conservative bill and be seen as doing it only because it's part of a deal in order to allow other things to go forward.

According to IQP, StrategyCorp was essentially saying that part of Mr. Duffy's strategy was, “If I can get the Tories to introduce the bill, the Liberals will be able to hide behind the Tories in order to do what essentially they want,” and that was to help EllisDon.

I'm just going to end on this point, and that is on the one of time allocation. Members will not be surprised that I really am not a big fan of time allocation. I think one of the things that we've done in this House—and every party has got their paw prints on this, so I won't pretend to be holier than thou. Every party in government in the last 20 years has in some way increased the ability of government, or a majority, to use time allocation.

I've got to say that it's a really sad thing, because what time allocation does is make this place very lazy in the sense that members who may have a legitimate concern about a particular issue are essentially not given the opportunity to voice their opposition in the way that they could in order to hold up a government—yes, to a degree—so that they're able to get some kind of changes on something that may not be popular.

We've all had them in our constituencies, and we've all seen them, as political parties of all stripes, where an

issue comes up and you say, “Listen, I can support the idea if only you would make the following changes.”

But because the government has time allocation as a tool in their back pocket—in this case, two political parties are using time allocation, the Conservatives with the Liberals—it makes it easy for them to reject the legitimate arguments of a party in this House or members of this House when it comes to trying to find a way to moderate whatever it is that they're doing. I think that diminishes what this Legislature is all about.

I got elected here in 1990. There was no time allocation. It was a majority government—in that case, the NDP government. We were forced, because Mr. Harris, who was in opposition as the third party leader, I remember, during one of our particular budgets, decided to hold up the House in all kinds of interesting ways, which I won't get into because it's too long to say. He had what he saw—I didn't see, but he saw—as a legitimate concern against the NDP budget, whatever one it was. He did everything that he could—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It wouldn't have been a balanced one. We know that.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Don't talk about balanced budgets. The Tories are the worst. They have the worst record when it comes to balancing budgets, but that's another story. You just need to look at Mr. Stephen Harper in Ottawa.

Anyway, my point was, right or wrong, Mr. Harris had a legitimate concern, from his particular perspective, and he used the rules of the House to hold this place up. My good friend Mr. Marchese was here at the time; he remembers.

I think the issue was to extend hearings on the budget so that more people would have an opportunity to comment on the budget; that was the issue he wanted.

Guess what a majority government had to do? It had to say, “Okay, we will give you more time in order to have your people come out and espouse whatever views you want to put forward against the particular budget of the day.”

But how was that a bad thing? That, I think, was a strengthening of what democracy is all about. It allowed a minority party—in that case, a third party, which was led by Michael Harris of the Conservatives—to hold up a majority government and, in exchange, get some hearings. It didn't stop us from passing our budget. It just made it difficult, and we had to compromise. That's what this Legislature is all about.

Time allocation is a lazy person's way of dealing with legislation. It says, “I'm right. I've got might in the numbers. I don't have to listen to you.” Why are people turned off of politics? I think that's part of the reason. It's not the only reason. They feel that they're powerless when it comes to raising their concerns about issues that may have legitimacy.

In all of our ridings—I don't care if it's Toronto; I don't care if it's northern Ontario or eastern Ontario or southwestern Ontario—we all have our regional issues where people see things differently. What people want in



the end is not always to have their way but to at least know that they've been heard and had an opportunity to have impact on the decision. I think that when you use time allocation, you very much diminish the trust and respect and the awe that some people may have in this place, and I think it just diminishes the overall product.

I want to say I will be voting against this time allocation motion, along with all of our colleagues. I've got to say that I look forward to a day when there is no time allocation in this place, because when that day happens I think it will be a better place.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** I will say I'm somewhat pleased to speak to this time allocation motion, on the programming motion. I have little truck with a lot of these shenanigans, but it does give me an opportunity to talk about some of the so-called housekeeping bills that are actually now going to go to committee and perhaps see the light of day. Secondly, it will give us an opportunity to get back to talking about the economy and getting people back to work.

A number of bills, as we know, are contained in the programming motion. I feel that many people, if they have any interest at all, have really questioned why it has taken so long for these things to get forward. Some of these bills, I talked to them a year and a half or two years ago, before the House had prorogued. We agree on many aspects of them; there's some good legislation contained in here.

I wanted to make reference first to the consumer protection act—that's Bill 55. Certainly, on our side of the fence, we have always fought for an open market and a trustworthy consumer market. Tim Hudak tabled the Consumer Protection Act in 2002. We know that this particular bill focuses on three general areas: real estate sales, and the phantom offer problem that reflects poorly on the industry; the debt consolidation people—some of those people have gone down the wrong road, to the detriment of many people who most need the help with their finances; and, of course, water heater rentals.

We understand that the door-to-door sales in the water heater business are the number two complaint received by the Ministry of Consumer Services. Certainly in my constit office we've received complaints on this one. Customers have a complaint, they get bounced back and forth between client service representatives, and they never really get any resolution. Seniors—it's upsetting when you put people of that age through this kind of a process. It's a business that has become marred by questionable practices.

One of my staff had an issue quite recently. She was dealing with quite a major player in the water heater rental industry and she discovered that she was paying more than her neighbours for the same product. I guess you would question: How does this happen? Obviously, there is a role for government to step in on this one.

Generally speaking, there appears to be, or there can be, deliberate deception, hiding of costs and exploitation of customers' vulnerabilities, especially in the door-to-

door business. Again, it reflects poorly on businesses, whether they're legitimate or not.

Obviously, consumers can be taken advantage of. You can't legislate away deception. You can't legislate away vulnerability. To put it bluntly, you can't legislate against stupidity, for that matter, but we can strengthen some of the tools that are available, whether it's an enforcement to save people the problem of having to go to court. These are people that, by and large, can't afford a lawyer to deal with these kinds of scams.

When the rules are broken, recourse is almost impossible. It's very slow. If you've got a claim against a less-than-honest business, it really can take years to process, sometimes. Again, the stress, the legal cost, even the health-related consequences, and what I find particularly troubling: a loss of confidence in the consumer and a loss of confidence in our economy.

There are many companies that provide superior products. They treat their customers with fairness, with respect, but times seem to be changing and, of course, obviously this legislation has to change with those times.

**1630**

Bill 82 is another one rolled into this schmozzle that we're wrapping up debate on today. That's the wireless services agreement. Now, I don't get complaints in that area around cellphones. My constituency office doesn't seem to have much business in that area. We do deal with some people who can't understand their contract, but we don't get those kinds of calls. I phoned the MP in our riding, the federal member's office. They're not getting calls either. But I know of examples.

I think of an example: A young fellow in a mall would like to have a cellphone. There's a little table set up in the mall, and this guy has a debit card and gets talked into laying out \$300 or \$400 for a cellphone, something he can ill afford. His parents find out about this. By the time they get to that shopping mall, that little fly-by-night operation is long gone. What do you do? Do you eat this contract? Do you try to cancel it? Do you try to disable the phone to try to eliminate the charges?

So it's good that the federal government stepped in on this, actually right about the time of prorogation. It really seemed to be a moot point to be talking about cellphones, because the CRTC had stepped in—there was a bit of duplication there. It's important, though. Apparently, it's an \$18-billion market and something worthy of the federal government to step in on.

Now, there's another good bill that seems to work, although I've got some reservations about it. That's Bill 36, the Local Food Act, another one rolled into this package. It's a bit of a start. It's very important for my riding. Down in Haldimand-Norfolk, particularly on the sand plain, we can grow just about anything you can grow in Canada. Thanks to Dalton McGuinty, we've seen a tremendous movement away from the tobacco industry into fruit and vegetable commodities. For years and years, our area was known as Ontario's golden garden. I think the marketing now is Ontario's garden. We're about 100 miles from—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Member from Oakville, I could hear everything you were saying.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** Should I sit down, Speaker? Let's keep our conversations to ourselves over there. I'm trying to make a point.

I represent a very diverse agricultural area. We're 100 miles from this city, and to anybody here who is on a 100-mile diet, we can provide the food. You don't necessarily have to buy it through your local retail. Most of our products, especially fruits and vegetables, go through the Food Terminal—it comes in about 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning. I invite people to come down to the roadside stands, check out our restaurants that specialize in homegrown food. We can grow just about anything, Speaker. The problem is selling it, and I don't see that Bill 36 is going to help us very much on that particular front.

My colleague MPP Pettapiece is here this afternoon. In his riding, in Stratford, they have what's called a local community food centre. This is great. It teaches people how to grow food. It goes beyond getting a can opener: how to harvest, how to cook the food, how to preserve local food. It's something we're very interested in, in our area. I know that my EA is on a local board. We're looking to set up something similar in the Norfolk area to work with processors, farmers and the whole community.

The bill doesn't talk about ag education. I used to teach high school agriculture back in the day when kids could take home economics and learn how to cook. I know that other courses have come along. Times change. I know there's a cosmo program, Speaker, how to apply makeup. Now, it's not for me to comment on that. That may well be important; I don't know. But I do have a bias, and I really think that opening a can of soup is an awful lot easier than peeling potatoes and developing a stock and learning how to do that.

Another important bill that we have to get through is Bill 77, the Hawkins Gignac Act, around carbon monoxide poisoning. The MPP for Oxford has brought this one in four times. He has introduced this four times. I really think that is a shame. I commend him for his persistence. It's very important in his area, given the tragedy. It's very important in the city of Woodstock. This is a bill that is designed to save lives. It's too bad it has been reintroduced so many times. We've got to get that one, particularly, right.

The last thing I want to comment on, also rolled into this programming motion, is the call for a select committee on developmental services. Over the past year, part of my previous critic role was community and social services. I have heard from so many families who are looking after loved ones who are in very dire circumstances, with desperate situations with respect to developmental delays and disabilities.

I had the Callaghan family up here in the spring. They have a 20-year-old daughter, Anna, who lives in my riding, in Simcoe. They came up and were in the members' gallery and indicated to me the difficulty that families have. They really can't cope. They can't handle this on their own. As a society, we have a responsibility

to do better than that for these people who are coming out of high school now, and there is a bit of an epidemic that we have to deal with. I think that one, obviously, is a no-brainer. If we can get that one through this particular process—I find this whole process a bit of a waste of time. Maybe I shouldn't say that. I actually find it somewhat distasteful. I guess my bias is more towards policy than the kind of politics that I see kicking around here. I find it regrettable myself.

Having said that, it's an opportunity to clear the deck on these bills, get some of these things on their way and get beyond the stalling and the paralysis, really, that we have seen in this Ontario government, particularly in the last year and a half.

I'll wrap up there. I'm looking forward to our next speaker on our side of the fence. I sincerely hope we can get on with it and pass this programming motion. And let's get people back to work.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Somebody mentioned an anniversary, I think, of 10 years of Liberal rule in this province. There was another anniversary this month that I just have to share with everyone. The other anniversary is, I was elected seven years ago.

*Applause.*

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Thank you. I want to take you back a little bit to that election because, unlike many other members of this chamber, I didn't come from city council and I didn't come from a political background. This was my introduction to politics, this place, and that race—it was a by-election—was my introduction to how politics are done.

I have to tell you that I came as a United Church minister—I still am—and in my congregation I had people across the political spectrum, probably weighted more with Liberals and New Democrats than Conservatives; I'll give you that. So I was pretty neutral about political parties until I ran in the by-election.

That was a wake-up call to me. John McGrath was one of our reporters here at Queen's Park in those days, and he described it as one of the dirtiest campaigns he had ever seen in Canada. Suffice it to say that there was a smear campaign launched against me by my Liberal opponents, and also by—it came here to this House. Cabinet ministers, among them Kathleen Wynne, stood up and spoke to this. The attacks upon me were things like taking a line out of a book I had written, which won a human rights award in Washington, DC, and was published out of the University of Berkeley, but no, they took a line out of context, translated it into many languages and delivered it anonymously to doors.

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They also attacked me for being street-involved as a young woman. It's true that I didn't finish high school. I had to go back to get my high school equivalent. It's true that I did live on the streets for a while, and do you know what? I never hid that fact. Never, never. I used to preach about that from the pulpit because most of my congregation were people with mental health and addiction



issues who were street-involved. And I told it as a story of hope. It's hopeful. It's hopeful when—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I would ask the member to talk about the programming motion and stick a little more—

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** To get back to the programming motion and to the time allocation motion, actually, because what we're dealing with is the time allocation motion, not the programming motion right now, which traditionally has been a chance for members to speak a bit—but I'm getting to the point. The point is this. The point is that after that experience, it was difficult not to be just a little cynical about the way politics is done.

I come to this place and see the programming motion, which this is the time allocation for, and see that, amidst a number of very good initiatives—we supported them. We've always supported them. Uncle Ernie, as we call him, but the member from Oxford's bill on carbon monoxide, making sure that there are detectors in every home—good bill. The member from Nickel Belt's bill, for some control over the tanning bed industry: That's a good bill. The select committee to look at the way we deal with people who have developmental disabilities: That's a good bill. That's from the member from Whitby-Oshawa. The wireless bill: a little bit redundant, as has been pointed out, perhaps, but a good bill. The Local Food Act, again, doesn't do much, but a good bill. We supported it. Human resources: almost a regulation of a bill, but again, a good bill. We supported it.

So one can ask, why are we time-allocating? In fact we, as New Democrats, weren't putting up speakers anymore to these bills. We wanted to see them get to committee. The only people who were putting up speakers were the Progressive Conservatives. They were putting up speaker after speaker after speaker, which maybe got under the government's skin a little bit. It's their democratic right to do, of course, but really what's kind of strange is that this is a bill that the Progressive Conservatives support, this time-allocation motion and this programming motion, and yet really is to time-allocate themselves, as the only people who were speaking and putting up speakers were the Progressive Conservatives—to those bills.

But there was a poison pill. There was the other bill in there: Bill 74, the EllisDon bill, as we've been speaking about. This was a bill for one company. You've heard our House leader speak about why he believes and we believe that that bill is in there, but not to impute motive. I would never do that, Mr. Speaker; never, ever do that. Suffice to say, it was a bill for one company, a company that wanted to get out of their collective agreement, and this bill was going to help them do that.

A horrible precedent, among other things; a horrible precedent to anybody who believes in collective bargaining. But, of course again, this is a government that tabled Bill 115, that stepped on the rights of teachers to collectively bargain. So obviously, part and parcel of being a Liberal, I suppose, is that this is okay. Then, surprise, surprise, today it was announced that, no,

they're going to take that bill out. Why, one might ask? Why the change of heart? Is it that the Liberal Party is, all of a sudden, the friend of organized labour and supports collective bargaining and isn't passing a bill just for one company, EllisDon? That's a company, by the way, that makes over \$3 billion in revenue, one of the biggest companies in construction in the world. Is that a true change of heart? No. It's because the Superior Court last week—timing one might question—ruled against the Ontario Labour Relations Board in favour of the company. They didn't have to work for EllisDon anymore, or so it seems on first blush—or so it seems. That's really what has transpired here.

So we're back to my original point, which is, what kind of animal is the Liberal Party? Well, certainly we heard the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke. He stood up and talked about principles, and I will grant him that. I think we all will. I grew up in a household that was part Progressive Conservative—red Tories, as we used to call them—and part NDP. I have that voice in my head. As I've said many times to the member from Renfrew, the Conservative Party does have principles. They're all wrong, but they do have them, absolutely.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Oh, and I thought she was going to say something nice. I rushed in because I thought she was going to say something nice.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Absolutely.

I only have a couple of minutes left. I want to do shout-outs to people who should have been in this programming motion: Liberal backbenchers who still probably believe that there is such a thing as Liberalism, that it's not the same as Toryism, that the two parties aren't identical. Members like the member from Etobicoke Centre, who happens to be here, and I'm delighted to speak about her as such, who introduced a bill about having a committee to look at Alzheimer's. Why isn't that bill in here? Or the member from Scarborough Southwest, who has a bill protecting elephants: Why isn't that in here? Then, of course, there was the former member from Niagara Falls, who had a bill on grandparents. Why isn't that in here? Why isn't the government looking after its own backbenchers and their interests? I don't get it. They're not in cabinet, but that shouldn't matter, Mr. Speaker. Those bills are good bills. They could have been part and parcel of this programming motion, but unfortunately they're not.

Again, maybe there still are some in the Liberal Party, in this government, who believe in the foundational aspirations of the Liberal Party and don't just think, again, Liberals and Tories, same old stories. But unfortunately, that's not what we see here.

I'm going to leave some space because I know other members want to speak. Suffice it to say that any time allocation motion is the abrogation of democratic principles, so automatically, we will vote against that. But in particular, this programming motion, which is the one that's trying to be forced through quickly—originally the reason was Bill 74. Let's face it; that's why that bill hit the floor, Bill 74, the EllisDon bill, to help one company

get out of its collective agreement, setting a terrible precedent—which, by the way, taking the bill out last minute doesn't fix. Nobody's fooled, Mr. Speaker. Everybody sees this for what it is.

I'll leave it at that. I'll leave my members with some time. I'm delighted to speak on behalf of all the good people of Parkdale–High Park, and thank you for seven years.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I feel it's important for those listening or viewing to sort of put a wrap around this thing. Today's motion is a time allocation motion, and it's a time allocation of the debate we had yesterday on a programming motion. It all sounds rather fuzzy, but if you break it down, it's limiting the debate on the programming motion.

The reason it's a bit of a kerfuffle here, and I think our whip, Mr. Yakabuski, described it quite capably in saying that the Premier has backed down or changed her mind or—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Turtled.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** —turtled. I think that's really a very important part for the viewer to realize.

Leadership is about principles, and she lectures us all the time about the changes that she's making to Ontario and how business is done in Ontario. This is one more example where you can't be trusted. A leader that can't be trusted is a significant problem. All along the line I see it—on broken promises.

1650

I can only say this: There are several things in the thing that we all support, and this is now at risk, the whole thing is at risk. Our leader, Tim Hudak, tried to make it clear that the Premier, when we came back here, was suggesting that everything was being blocked and managed so that legislation was all logjammed. So our leader put a principled position on the table. He said, "We'll put these things together that have nothing to do with jobs and the economy," and he also offered her the 14 white papers on jobs, the economy and other elements, to clear the deck and get on with, as my colleague says, the business of the province: young people, jobs, the future and all of that.

There were some pros and cons within that programming motion—eight bills and a select committee—and we had a deal. Now, all of a sudden, under no principle at all, she has been intimidated by some leadership in some sectors of the economy. I guess the name Pat Dillon has flown up, but I'll put it on the record here: Pat Dillon is a friend to whoever has got the keys to the car. That's who he's a friend to.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Yes, he's a friend to the person with the limousine. That's who he's friends with.

I would only say this: I look at some of the other bills inside this House, and very few of them have anything to do with the economy and the plight that we find ourselves in, with a staggering deficit—that's a structural

deficit—in the budget. We have a staggering accumulated debt; the third-highest expenditure is just servicing the debt, the interest.

But I thought there was a really good article this morning in the media. I'm going to quote here. It says, "Stolen Decade." This is the anniversary for the Liberals. They're quite proud of their record. Check it out: You failed. You got a D. I'm not kidding. Just check it out, though. Look at the debt; look at the deficit. They're even cutting strips for diabetics, how many strips they can have. Can you imagine what they're doing? They are taking away physiotherapy from seniors.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** No, no. You'll have your time. You stand up and speak. Stand up and speak: That's what this place is about.

I think it's important, though. If people look at the column, this is a third party, objective reporter looking at the business that's transpiring, and they list here a list of broken promises—some of which were mentioned earlier today as well, I think, by the lead speaker, Mr. Bisson of the NDP. They promised in the very first election to do a lot of things. The Premier stood by the lamppost saying, "I won't raise your taxes," and the first thing he did is he brought in the single biggest tax increase in history. And no, he's not done. She's talking now about the new revenue tools, they call them—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I would remind the minister and the member that we don't have cross-dialogue and an argument while I'm sitting here. We go through me, okay? And I don't want to have to say that again. Thank you.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I have great deference to your remark there, and I fully accept that.

I'd say this, though: Now they've got another debate, Mr. Speaker—and I know you pay attention, because your question this morning was right on the money on the Pan Am Games. I commend you for that; it was an excellent question. No answer, though.

Here's, really, what I'm trying to state here: It's very clear that they're talking now about the tax tools, the toolbox for raising 50 billion new dollars out of everyone's pocket in Ontario to fund transit. They're talking now about the third tax increase. The first one was the health tax—or premium or whatever it was. Then they brought in the harmonization of the sales tax, provincial and federal. Do you know something? That caused the price of a litre of gas to go up 11 cents overnight. Overnight, gas went up 11 more cents, and people are wondering why gas is so expensive in Ontario. That was the second one. The third one is going to be brought in right after the next election if the people of Ontario are not paying attention and they elect them again: It's going to be a tax to deal with transit. It will probably be called a carbon or environmental feel-good tax.

This article, though, lists all of these promises that were broken, and I think I have to put it on the record.



The first one was the promise to close the coal plants. The strange thing here: They haven't closed any of them. The only one that was ever closed was Elizabeth Witmer's. It was the one in Lakeview that eventually Hazel McCallion caused all the stink about and eventually it precipitated into—we were going to put a gas plant there, is what was going to happen, because the transmission corridor was there. She wanted to make it into a park, so that's why we ended up with the two gas plant scandals. It started right there on that decision, and it started with Hazel McCallion having a hissy fit and Premier Wynne changing her mind. In fact, it was a political thing during the election.

Also the promise on the 407—they were going to fix that problem. How did they make out? They said they were going to freeze the rates. Well, the toll rate was 12 cents per kilometre in 2003, when they got elected; it's 26 cents now. They fixed it all right. Quit working so hard.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Yes, we can't take any more help like that.

This article I would urge all the members—these are the things that should be discussed in an election that should be coming up about next March, when the budget comes in. Christina Blizzard's article is worth reading. One more quote here, and this really sums it all up. The final quote here is from the Premier. It says, "We will govern with honesty and integrity."

Well, look. Minister Chan was hoodwinked when they gave him that file. I'm not sure he had a look at the 2015 budget. He still doesn't know what the Pan American Games are going to cost; that's clear. You asked that question this morning, as did my colleague from Barrie. I would say that's another scandal.

Mr. Klees asked one today; it's another scandal about that. That whole scandal of covering up \$300,000—I think it was \$300,000—that was part of a loss in CN and somehow transferring it over to a loss at GO Transit. The executive from CN mysteriously, three or four months later, ended up working for GO and mysteriously the little deficit went away. Why? They overbilled them for certain things.

I don't know why the people of Ontario aren't paying closer attention. Because right now, if you really look, without any of the political ideology around it, we're in worse shape. We're spending a lot more money, and it's affecting seniors, I think, the most of all—and the young. The young are being hoodwinked that they're getting the best education in the world. There are all kinds of articles in here about jobs in the future. It's in the media this morning about the mismatch of jobs without people and people without jobs. That report was issued by one of the graduate schools here at U of T, and what it's saying is that we're training kids for jobs—now there's too many teachers, now we have too many doctors and we have too many lawyers. But we don't have the right skills for the right jobs. I think that just proves that somebody's not paying attention to the economy of Ontario, and that's

part of what has been discussed in this House on our side: Garfield Dunlop on the trades issue and our leader talking about jobs in the economy at every opportunity to meet with young people and talk about it.

But there are a few other points that need to be put on the record here. That's the column here. The article here says, "Provinces Protest Job Skills Program." The job skills program is the federal government plan for training people for the jobs that exist, not for jobs that some academic says exists. I think this is very well supported by in fact our own Don Lovisa, the president of Durham College, who is widely quoted in an article, as well, on how important the college system is to training people for job shortages that exist today.

In this whole discussion on these bills, what our leader Tim Hudak has said—clearing the deck is what the programming motion did, and he's bringing forward recommendations to the Premier about how to have this economy recover. That's what we should be talking about, not this procedural wrangling that's going on. Now even the agreement that was reached has been breached by the Liberal Party. They're not going to keep their word one more time. This should be added to that column I referred to by Christina Blizzard.

But in our caucus, we're quite concerned really also about the young people. You've got the seniors who are in trouble. They're cutting physiotherapy. They're cutting diabetics. There's not enough money for chronic disease. They're laying off nurses. We heard from the member from Nipissing that 20 nurses were given the pink slip the other day. I heard another one say there were 100 nurses in their area got the pink slip. This province is going to Hades—hell, I should say—in a handbasket. This is more proof that nobody over there is doing their job.

**1700**

I've got trouble with the 407. I've got trouble with transit. I've got trouble with the environment. Commercial fill is a good example and—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The Minister of Natural Resources might want to go back to his seat.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** The Minister of Natural Resources mentioned the 407. You would be ashamed if you knew what happened to the 407. There's another promise. You promised to complete that to 35/115 by 2016. Okay? Where is it going to? It's going to Harmony Road in Oshawa. It's going to be a complete disaster. That's another example of cheating the people of Ontario: promising something during an election and having no intention of following through at the end of the day—none whatsoever. It's just tragic what they do.

And then they have this collegial kind of campfire conversation and they try to smooth things over. I think this agreement that we're talking about today is a perfect example of a government that's in retreat and disarray, no question about it.

I think, in fairness, the NDP have put them on notice. They've done an excellent job pulling the plug on Bill

74. That's the labour bill; they want to call it the EllisDon bill. In fairness, our member—I believe it's Monte Montgomery that brought in—

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** McNaughton. Get his last name right.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Monte McNaughton. He brought the bill in to correct an oversight, an anomaly, in a labour agreement, I believe in London, Ontario.

If you look behind the EllisDon scandal, members of the cabinet are actually related to the EllisDon organization. If you look at the Minister of Health and perhaps David Peterson and the rest of it, I think you'll find a pretty close relationship there. We'll just leave it at that.

I would only say that it comes down to the single word "trust." When you're thinking about it, what you should really say is, can you trust a leader who won't keep their word, not just promises during an election, but within agreements with the official opposition leader, Mr. Hudak, to move the legislation forward quickly and to get on with jobs and the economy in the province of Ontario? I have no time for that. You cannot have a reasonable debate with a person who doesn't tell you the truth, and that's what trust and honour are about. That's what it's about. They can protest all they want. I'd encourage some of them to stand this afternoon and refute some of the comments, either the ones directly from the media or the agreements that have been signed.

I'll leave a couple of minutes for someone else.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** It's always a pleasure to speak to time allocation motions. I've got to be frank: We always oppose time allocation motions for a good reason; that is, they limit debate on issues. But it's not because the Liberals are doing it. The Tories did it and, quite frankly, New Democrats did it when we were in power. We all did it. That's why I want to be frank, because otherwise it would make it appear as if the only reason we are opposing is because the Liberals are introducing a time allocation motion, which is not the case.

Under the Harris regime, boy, did they time-allocate. I always make fun because when we were in power, we used to have hearings that lasted a whole month—a whole month—to give people an opportunity to beat us up. When the Tories got in power, they learned a good lesson. They said, "Why give the folks a whole month to beat us up when we can give them three days and get less beaten up?" That was very clever; Mike Harris was not unintelligent. So I oppose it as a matter of course, because that's what we have to do.

But why do we oppose this particular time allocation motion? Not because of the majority of bills that are contained within it, but because of Bill 74. I'm not sure if people had an opportunity to read on the record what Bill 74 actually says, but I want to read it for the record. In the explanatory note, this is what it says: "The bill amends the Labour Relations Act, 1995 to end bargaining rights recognized and conferred by certain working agreements entered into before May 1, 1979 between an employer and a council of trade unions." It's very clear

what it does. By law, it says, "We're breaking an agreement."

Normally what happens is, you allow an employer with a trade union to work out an arrangement between the two of them. Because EllisDon didn't quite get what he wanted from the unions, he decided that he was going to come to the Liberals and the Tories to get that bill in the Legislature in order to get in law through this Legislature an act that normally is agreed upon by two parties, a labour union and the corporation, to come to an agreement by either changing it or abiding by it.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Speaker, check out your friends there. They've got these props they're showing.

Rather than allowing a process to work as it should, the Tories decided to bring in Bill 74 and they did this in collusion with the Liberals. As the member from Renfrew-Nipissing said, "I thought we had a deal," and he did have a deal with the Liberals. In fact, the two of you colluded together and it was just a question of deciding who was going to do it. Would it be the government or would it be the official opposition? In that official agreement, they decided, "We'll leave it to the member from London-Kent-Middlesex. He'll do it, and we, the government, the Liberals, will support them."

Why do I know that the Liberals are keenly supportive of this? Because the Premier quite happily stated in an interview:

"This is an anomalous situation"—she said it today. "The situation arose in the 1950s"—as if to say, if it arose in the 1950s, it should be null and void; it doesn't mean anything.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** That's what the court said.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Madame, that's not what the court—the OLRB had said that the contract existed.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Not the OLRB. That's what the court said.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** No, no—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I'd remind the speaker that you have to address the Chair.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** No, don't remind me, Speaker. Remind others who are interjecting and involving me. But I don't mind, through you, Speaker.

The Premier said, "This is about bringing this company into line with all of the other construction companies in the province." This is to bring them in line, not suggesting for one moment that they ought to work that out between the two parties, but rather that they, legislatively, will correct an anomaly, as if somehow people shouldn't be working these things out and that they can be done legislatively, which is what she's done.

"From my perspective," she continues, "it's about a level playing field and it's a very good example of the kind of thing where we can find agreement and we should be able to move ahead." "Where we can find agreement," meaning between the Tories and the Liberals, working together—and you should do this tightly and feel good about it—to change the law and break an agreement that the Ontario Labour Relations Board said



was valid. Until, of course, it went to the next level of the Superior Court, and they said it wasn't, which is what the minister was getting at. If that was true, as we said, why not let that process carry on, as opposed to having this bill embedded, as it were, in this motion?

The Premier announces today that she will not be supporting it, which must have hurt the feelings of many Tories today, who said, "I thought we had a deal." One of the movers and shakers—i.e., the Premier, with the highest power in the land of Ontario—decided to say that she will not support this bill. That doesn't mean that she's taking it out of this motion. It's still embedded. She's still saying that she would have been quite happy to have changed the law and break an agreement. She was quite happy to do that as a Liberal, with the Tories' help.

My point is this: Does a corporation, one of the biggest construction corporations in Canada, whose profits exceed \$3 billion—do they need your help?

1710

The member from Renfrew-Nipissing was talking about—what's his name?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Pat Dillon.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Pat Dillon. Good heavens, I forgot. Pat Dillon—as if to say he is a true villain that we need to stop. He doesn't say for one moment that this particular company—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Madame, s'il vous plaît. Monsieur le Président—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** If you deal through the Chair and you're not worrying about the other side, I will deal with the other side.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** So we have the member from Renfrew-Nipissing claiming that Pat Dillon is the true villain and that this man has so much power, we need to stop him—not EllisDon, with the \$3-billion profit that they make each and every year, even with a unionized staff. They're still making \$3 billion in profits. "That company is not powerful. We don't need to stop them. But we need to stop Pat Dillon, because that man is so powerful that he can break the Conservative Party." EllisDon can't break the Conservative Party. EllisDon would be a great contributor, to help them build a party with the \$3-billion profits they're making—

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Minister of Rural Affairs, come to order.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** So the point I make is, they don't need your help. They're doing just fine. Why the Liberals would jump on board of this makes me ill. I don't get it. Speaker, do you get it? I don't.

They don't need your help. They don't need their help. They don't need the Tories' help—

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Point of order, member for Essex.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Speaker, I don't know if you've noticed, but the Minister of Government Services,

the Minister of Rural Affairs and, I believe, the member from Ottawa-Orléans have repeatedly held up a photograph, a picture of our leader, Andrea Horwath, as if to let us know what she looks like. I don't know if they're infatuated with her. They continuously look at this picture. I can assure you, Speaker, I know what she looks like—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. I would ask the members to cease and desist.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** This is a construction company that has been using skilled, unionized labour for a long, long time, and they've been doing well—

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Minister of Rural Affairs.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** —and they're earning good profits. They don't need the help of Liberals and they don't need the help of Tories. But these two parties have colluded to introduce a bill that would break a union contract—and I understand it from Tories, but when Liberals claim to be the friends of labour, that I do not understand.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's a pleasure to get another chance to speak to this motion today.

On Monday, in my remarks, I addressed how Bill 74 raises significant questions about this government's priorities, and I just want to take us back a little bit. There have been great leaders in this province who have fought for worker rights—not too many on that side of the House and not too many over there—a number of good people in my own riding of Kitchener-Waterloo. In fact, we lost a good leader this week. His name was Orville Thacker. For many years, he stood shoulder to shoulder with those people who do the hard work in this province and serve in multiple professions, from the trades to the labour movement.

Speaker, why would this government include in a time-allocated programming motion a piece of legislation that stands only to benefit one large, well-connected company, a company that has historic fiduciary ties to the party currently in government? Why not, for instance, include instead another fine piece of legislation that is of importance to the construction and the development industry: Bill 69, the Prompt Payment Act, introduced by my 2012 by-election colleague, the member from Vaughan? It's a good piece of legislation that we actually all agree on. After all, this bill was passed unanimously in this House. Why not clear the decks for a bill that all parties already support, get it to committee, bring it to third reading?

Just to refresh everyone's memory, Bill 69 set out minimum norms for payment schedules in the construction industry that would ensure that contractors and subcontractors receive a predictable flow of funds for the

work that they perform on a construction project. Even EllisDon would be very supportive of this piece of legislation. It addressed a problem facing the construction industry, namely the widespread problem of late payment to contractors and subcontractors.

This is a very real, tangible problem in the construction industry. It slows down development and it slows down economic growth, and there is a solution before us that we can actually do something about. By ensuring that contractors and subcontractors receive their progress and final payments, they can effectively and successfully complete their work. That's good for the economy. That's what we should be talking about in this House.

The bill would allow contractors and subcontractors the option to suspend work or terminate their contracts, which would provide them a remedy when payments are delayed. There is an accountability piece.

Finally, by placing an obligation on the payer to pay interest on any unpaid payments, it ensures that we are giving the owners incentives to pay their bills on time. I know it's quite a concept, but people need to get paid when they do the hard work.

I think we can all agree that this is an important piece of legislation. In fact, we have all agreed that it's important, and yet it is not included in this motion.

I have heard many, many stakeholders, organizations and constituents on Bill 69: the Canadian Precast/Prestressed Concrete Institute in Ottawa—they're concerned about it; George and Asmussen Masonry Ltd. in Breslau; the Canadian Concrete Masonry Producers Association in Toronto; and the Ontario Masonry Contractors' Association in Mississauga, just to name a few. When the council of Ontario construction trades visited Queen's Park a few weeks ago, I met with the Grand Valley Construction Association, a group that represents local contractors in Kitchener–Waterloo who expressed the need for the swift passage of Bill 69.

All of these groups acknowledged the importance of this legislation to a sector of Ontario's economy that is a huge driver for growth. Every caucus and each member of this Legislature expressed their support for the legislation, and yet it doesn't merit inclusion in the programming motion we are debating today. If the Conservatives were truly concerned about the economy, they would have negotiated this piece into the omnibus bill that is before us—or, as my good colleague from Timiskaming–Cochrane said yesterday, it's the ominous bill. That was a good line. You have to give props where they are due.

As I mentioned on Monday, the people of this province have serious questions about the priorities of this government. We've been paying attention, though. We've been paying close attention. Just as you are holding up props about what we're doing, we pay close attention to what you do as well, because we always have to keep our eye on you. There has to be accountability. I know you're not used to it. It has been almost 10 years of a free rein, but welcome to the new reality of Queen's Park. Accountability 101 is happening right here, right now, compliments of the New Democratic Party.

### *Interjections.*

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I can see that you're very uncomfortable with it, but now we hear that the Premier is looking for suggestions from the public about what her party's priorities should be. I know that the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke earlier gave us a very colourful, dramatic presentation on what he thinks about more listening. He thinks the time for listening is over; of course, they've never been very good at listening, period, so that's understandable.

I know the Liberals are setting up a website and have set up a toll-free number. Gee, you know, that sounds a little familiar. We did that as well, through both budget sessions, and it strikes me as another example of the Premier following while Andrea Horwath is leading.

We all hear much crowing from the government these days about their commitments to essentially New Democratic ideas:

—our Financial Accountability Office: That's great;

—home care wait times: We pushed for it, you had 10 years to get it done and we ensured that it happened in this last budget; and

—youth job creation initiatives: We made it happen, and it's just in time, this initiative.

Really, it all amounts to proof that this government is obviously out of ideas. And yet, priorities remain a question mark, because I'm still confused as to why Bill 74 merits such pride of placement in this programming motion.

### **1720**

I would like to read into the record a list of the current top 10 policy ideas of the Liberals. You're going to find this interesting. I want you to listen really carefully, because I'm sure that you will not hear EllisDon in this list:

“End the breed ban in Ontario! Remove breed specific language.” Long overdue; definitely worthwhile.

Creating a panel to consult the public on end-of-life choices for the dying: You know, this is a very serious and very emotional issue that we have to have a conversation and a debate on in the province of Ontario. My good friend Henry Rempel passed away in Switzerland two weeks ago. He had to fly to another country to die with dignity. He was in pain for years. We have to have this discussion. This is on the list. The people of this province want us to have a debate on this.

Where is the concern about EllisDon on this list? It's not here. We're talking about child care. We're talking about education. We're talking about the integrity of people's lives. That's more important.

“Accountability in government”—I mean, we're dealing with this right now.

“Mental health issues in schools.”

Preventing retired teachers from taking part-time teaching work: People want to find a little bit more balance, because there are jobs out there that young teachers need.

They want MPPs' expenses to be online. Let's talk about that.



Tax recreational marijuana: Mr. Trudeau is already ahead on this one.

Lower income tax to those earning below \$25,000. Let's have that conversation.

"Add shop classes to curriculum." Let's talk about the trades; let's talk about 21st century learning skills.

Where are the priorities of this government? The people in this province have told you where they think we should be putting our attention. We have brought big issues to the table around financial accountability, around health, around jobs, around the economy, around the environment, around justice, and yet we're here today talking about one company—the interests of one over the interests of the whole.

I think the people of this province have lost patience with it. I clearly have lost patience with it, and I think it's very clear: When people look at this House, they see where our principles are, they see where our values are and they know that if they come to our fundraisers they're not going to have their specific issues come right here to this place.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I know. So if EllisDon comes to you and asks for something, they know that for a certain price, they're going to get a certain product, and—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'll remind the member from Kitchener–Waterloo that we don't want to make an impression that they may have done something for financial gain. You will withdraw that.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I withdraw.

Just to recap, the deal that you brokered is no longer in play. The sort of Let's Make a Deal game show political game is not happening anymore. It's not going to happen on our watch in this House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** One of the people I have a good deal of respect for in this House is the House leader for the New Democratic Party, Monsieur Bisson, who over the years has been a proponent of programming motions. I've always said, you know, he's very wise when he comes forward. Now, he may not agree with this one, but he has often suggested that, and I have said to our folks over here, "We should be listening to Monsieur Bisson and coming forward with programming motions with which all of us can agree," and I think that should happen.

But I want to say we began this particular debate last week. It was a simple procedural motion. It outlined a timetable to deal with a number of bills; not just one, a number of bills on which there's a great deal of consensus. It contemplates movement of these bills through the legislative process in a timely way and ensures that some of the game-playing we've seen in this place doesn't continue to happen.

What it does not do is somehow hamper debate. We've put forward ample time at all stages for debate and discussion, for public hearings—by the way, I can't recall public hearings on the social contract that the New

Democratic Party brought in. Anyway, this does call for public hearings in the case of those bills that are going to committee, and opportunities for parties to come forward with amendments to strengthen those bills. The motion also establishes a framework for a select committee on developmental services, something that all sides of the House have agreed is an important step.

All parties have a responsibility to make minority Parliament work. We are pleased to see that the opposition has started to work with us, responding to the Premier's call to move forward on those pieces of legislation we can agree on. In fact, I want to be complimentary to the New Democratic Party. They had already shown some degree of co-operation before this all happened. Now we have the official opposition joining them and I'm pleased to see that.

Last spring, we were able to find common ground with our colleagues in the third party. This fall, we've been able to find some common ground with colleagues in the official opposition. We're hopeful the spirit of co-operation between all parties can continue. We understand we will not be agreeing on everything. For example, we look forward to additions to the programming motion that were not accepted by the official opposition. I was disappointed that they would not join us to fast-track the two job-creating bills—Bills 91 and 105—but we'll continue to work on moving those bills through the legislative process. In the meantime, I hope we can get to a vote on the programming motion. It's a simple procedural motion. We've spent a good deal of time on it.

Now, I heard reference made to contracts and hearings and so on. I can remember, because I've been in the Legislature a few years, the New Democratic Party, which has characterized itself as, and in some cases, particularly the person sitting in the chair, has been a friend of labour over the years, and a party which has respected the collective agreements. Well, the social contract tore up every collective agreement in the province, and that was the New Democratic Party. I was shocked at the time, but I think they felt there was a necessity to do it.

Another issue that has come up, because the third party has raised it, is that of somehow a fundraiser—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Essex and the member from Timmins–James Bay.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I know there's a fundraiser coming up. This is free advertising, because I want to help out my friends in the NDP. They've been—

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Jim, what's the date of that fundraiser? Let me know.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Wednesday, October 16—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I would ask the Minister of Rural Affairs that if he would like to do a play-by-play, he might want to be a hockey announcer. Otherwise, go back to your seat. Thank you.

*Continue.*

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** The fundraiser is at the Royal Conservatory of Music, the Leslie and Anna Dan

Galleria, Toronto, 273 Bloor Street West. It's called the Leader's Gala. All I'm saying is that the Conservative Party has continuing fundraisers going on. I'll tell you, the lights are on 24/7 at the Albany Club. We know that the Liberal Party has fundraisers. But you make it sound as though, somehow, the New Democratic Party does not have high-end fundraisers. Well, the Leader's Gala says that if you want to be in the Leader's Circle, it costs \$9,500; if you want to be in the Queen's Park Circle, \$7,500; if you want to be a Counsel, \$4,500; Liaison, \$2,500; and a Guest—the ordinary person, a guest—\$1,250. And you make your cheque payable to the New Democratic Party.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, I'm not quite sure what—the minister seems to be getting off the subject a little bit, and he has his prop there that he's reading from. I would suggest that you talk to the motion as opposed to reading out costs at a fundraiser. I would warn him that I do not want him to continue that way. So, continue.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** The context, I say to the Speaker, who is always very fair, is that we've heard repeated references from the third party as to somehow legislation being affected by fundraising and fundraisers. So it's always interesting to see, for instance, who would show up at any one of the fundraisers, whether it's the governing party or the official opposition or the New Democratic Party, and then see what stands are taken. My suspicion is, it has no influence. I have full confidence that each of the parties here, despite what the member for Lanark had to say about what was talked about at the Conservative caucus, as somehow it being associated with a particular bill—I think, by and large, this doesn't happen.

Now, I did not want to go on at length, because I recognize that we should be getting to a vote on this. But I appreciate all the contributions from the members of this House, and I just wanted to ensure that everybody knows that everybody has fundraisers. I don't know whether Bob from Hamilton or Sam from Sudbury or Louise from Iroquois Falls could afford to go to this particular fundraiser, so I would hope there would be a special one.

1730

Thank you for being indulgent. The Speaker has been most indulgent.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I must say, the minister has a way, doesn't he?

Further debate? Last call for further debate.

Seeing none, Mr. Milloy has moved government notice of motion 23.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute—no, I'm sorry. Five members have stood. Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I believe the ayes had it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

Pursuant to standing order 28, the vote on government notice 23 has been deferred until deferred votes on Thursday, October 3, 2013.

Do we agree? Agreed.

*Vote deferred.*

## WASTE REDUCTION ACT, 2013 LOI DE 2013 SUR LA RÉDUCTION DES DÉCHETS

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 1, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 91, An Act to establish a new regime for the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste and to repeal the Waste Diversion Act, 2002 / Projet de loi 91, Loi créant un nouveau cadre pour la réduction, la réutilisation et le recyclage des déchets et abrogeant la Loi de 2002 sur le recyclage des déchets.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Thank you, Speaker, for the opportunity to finish my remarks from yesterday on Bill 91. I left off by saying that this bill actually continues every single eco tax program the Liberals ever created—still, that fact didn't stop the environment minister from claiming that it did this summer. In fact, the day the minister announced he would be tabling Bill 91, he, of course, huffed and puffed in front of the media that he was getting rid of eco taxes. Too bad for him that the entire press gallery here at Queen's Park didn't believe what he had to say.

In fact, I remember a certain Canadian Press reporter tweeting that the minister's claim was the "most misleading public statement" by an Ontario cabinet minister. The rest of the media agreed. They immediately called him out on his statements, and his entire press conference fell apart. That's because they knew he was just trying to hide eco taxes.

But, Speaker, let me tell you, the minister was actually playing an even sillier game. All the bill actually does is move eco taxes from your receipt to the price tag on the store shelf. Clearly, Bill 91 is nothing more than an eco tax shell game.

The final area I wanted to return to before I conclude is the ICI sector. As I have pointed out, the Liberal government has allowed waste diversion in this sector to collapse under their lack of leadership. Still, the Liberals now claim they will use Bill 91 to set recycling targets for paper and packaging in this sector, but we can't know for sure, because the ICI sector is only mentioned in the strategy, not the proposed act. Again, this would be left to regulation.

Speaker, I think you're probably noticing a trend here, that all important decisions are being left for later. Well, that is unacceptable. It's not enough to waltz into this Legislature with a bill that has less detail than a white



paper, and then make a bunch of big claims, hoping that nobody actually reads the legislation. And it's not enough to tell Ontarians that if they're confused about the proposed law they should refer to some strategy document that is subject to change at any time. People expect more from their government. They actually expect real leadership. Unfortunately, though, the Liberal government has failed miserably on this front yet again, with its poorly drafted and hastily conceived Waste Reduction Act. There are no cost estimates. There's no regulatory impact assessment. There's just a bill that leaves everything to regulation, and a strategy that was whipped up to fill in for the bill's many shortcomings.

Now, Speaker, I have repeatedly pointed out in my remarks today and yesterday that what the Liberals say and what they write in their bills are two totally different things. So anyone who hears the minister claim his bill will create jobs obviously can't take him seriously. With the way the bill is structured, we know it will force a loss of jobs in Ontario's manufacturing sector.

All this bill does is create job-killing taxes and red tape. If this is the Premier's job creation strategy, Ontario is in serious trouble. We in the Ontario PC caucus have a different vision for this sector. We believe we should create the right conditions for economic growth and let the private sector manage job creation, not the government.

As I wrap up, let me finish with our major points of opposition to the bill. First, doubling down on WDO's powers is unacceptable to our party. We believe the Ministry of the Environment should regulate the recycling industry, not an unaccountable agency. I think that the good men and women who work in the Ministry of the Environment should find it insulting that the minister believes they cannot regulate the recycling sector and that they need some unaccountable agency to do their work for them. I, unlike the minister, do not believe the environment ministry is toothless. There are plenty of good people who are willing to do the job if the minister would be willing to put his confidence in them. Speaker, we believe the ministry is up to the job, and that's why we are demanding that the minister remove all sections dealing with the authority from the bill.

Second, intermediary sections of the bill constitute an undue interference in the marketplace and should be removed from Bill 91. I know he's getting these notes.

Third, sections 44 and 45 will move our province in the wrong direction and cannot be supported by our party. We believe that producers and municipalities must find a compromise that works for both groups. It has to work for both groups, and I highlighted the need for that. We should be working in partnership, instead of pitting one against the other. Reach out to our partners in the municipal sector. Reach out to business. Allow them to work together, not pit them against one another.

Fourth, all Liberal eco tax programs should be phased out now. It's not enough to leave the potential wind-down of these programs to the whim of the minister. Throughout the bill, we heard the minister speak to the fact that, "We're going to get rid of them." When? One,

two, three, four, five years? We've heard from members like Randy Pettapiece of Perth-Wellington on the tire stewardship program. We've had farmers through our doors to talk about that. Electronics—the list goes on and on and on.

Speaker, I appreciate the time given. I've used the full hour. I know that the minister referred to me as Ted Cruz the other day, but I feel I've stood up and spoken on behalf of our community and our constituents. I thank you for the time allotted to speak to Bill 91.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'm pleased to speak today—

**Interjection:** Questions and comments. Two minutes.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** Oh, it's two minutes. Okay. Thanks.

I'm happy to hear the comments from the member from Kitchener-Conestoga. I've got more to say in the debate following.

This is important legislation, Speaker. It's something that people have been pushing for for a very long time. I think that members around this House understand that we have a critical problem when it comes to our success in waste reduction and waste diversion. I think it should be clear to all of us that we're missing incredible opportunities to actually put people to work in the province of Ontario.

The Conservative Party has been very vocal about what they call eco taxes, the eco fee programs. It is extraordinarily problematic what has happened, so they have good reason to highlight those issues. But it takes more than good one-liners and so forth in the news to actually create good public policy, so I'm concerned that we're not going to have co-operation from the official opposition to actually bring this legislation forward in a serious way to have the full debate that it needs to have to make sure that the voices of people who have been working on this policy for years to try to make it right are heard through the committee process.

Speaker, this is a huge bill. It's not something that I think is top of mind for people in the province of Ontario at this point, but it's something that should be because there are huge implications for communities across the province. Landfill just continues to build up, and, as I mentioned earlier, there are huge missed economic opportunities for jobs here in Ontario.

We are last in the country right now when it comes to waste diversion. We have a whole lot that we can do and that we should do. The bill, as I will say, is far from perfect at this moment. We've all got to dig in to make it work. I look forward to further debate.

1740

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I want to comment on the speech, but also on the comment on the speech, because I think it showed a very constructive approach. What we've had, unfortunately, from the Conservative Party is the Tea Party approach: "We're just going to be opposed

to everything. Let's engage in partisan rhetoric and not be constructive."

I'm disappointed with that, because I happen to have a lot of time for the Conservative critic, who I think is a thoughtful person, a very good person, a well-meaning person. I heard the speech. It went on for an hour.

When I listen to some of the reviews out there, whether it's the business sector or the environmental sector or the general public, they're saying, "All we're hearing again is the partisan rhetoric about it." I thought that in my initial remarks I was very non-partisan. I indicated that I had consulted widely on this with the business community, with the environmental community, with municipalities, with the critic for the Conservative Party and the critic for the New Democratic Party. I was trying to gather as much as possible. I thought that this was a great opportunity, not for the government or any particular individual minister to bring forward a bill and get all the credit or lack of credit for it, but for members of this House to work on a piece of legislation.

Yes, we're going to have our disagreements. The New Democratic Party critic has said that, but I'm looking forward to his speech, which I anticipate will be thoughtful and analytical and constructive in its approach, as opposed to simply firing partisan barbs at either a minister or a government. I think that works much better. For the newer members of the Legislature, I advocate that, as opposed to allowing the people who write the speeches and prepare the material to simply give a partisan approach to a speech of this kind. I'm disappointed, but I hope, as we get to committee, that we will be able to forge a bill that we can all be in agreement with.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I certainly want to respect the comments by our critic and the member from Kitchener-Conestoga, Mr. Harris. I've listened. It's a very technical bill. I believe it's 133 sections and 66 pages, and all of those sections have a significant component dealing with the regulatory authority. If you read the preamble statement, it really says here that the "general regulation-making provisions relating to it" regarding "regulations made under the old act remain in force."

So they're really changing the name. As our critic said, they're changing the name. Also, he made a very strong point, which I believe is another issue broadly across the government. They're delegating all the authority and the enforcement capability to the WDO. That's the organization that doesn't report to anyone, technically, except the minister.

In my case, I really believe that our plan is, first of all, to protect jobs and the economy—it's absolutely critical—and strict enforcement. I can say that in my riding of Durham there are three issues. I've talked to the minister, not provoked him in question period; that's the third step. The first step is to talk to the minister. The second step is to reassure my constituents that I've written it and documented it. The third step is to get up in question period and ask about sewage sludge, ask about

clean fill and ask about the Drive Clean program, which is another dismal failure in terms of the switch they made there, from testing real smog to testing nothing but the computer in the car. That's what they're doing. You've got to spend \$450. There's proof, an example right there in my riding, where people are upset by the enforcement and the interpretation, and they're delegating all this to another authority. It's completely unacceptable.

We put, and our leader puts, the environment first. Environment and a strong economy go together, and you can't have one without the other. The member from Kitchener-Conestoga did a great job on this, and I look forward to more debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Once again, it's an honour to be able to rise in this House and speak on Bill 91. I didn't see all of the members' speeches. I saw some of it on TV and some of it in person. I'm actually in this House because of a lack of waste diversion in this province. I was one of a group who fought a landfill in northern Ontario—

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Which government?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** We fought the Mike Harris government on that landfill.

Last week, I was speaking in our riding regarding not how to stop a landfill, but how to make sure to make a landfill safe. Ironically, 10 years later, the same problems that the people of Timiskaming-Cochrane faced, the people in Oxford county are now facing. That is the fault of this government, because this government has not made the rules easier for people to understand how a landfill is licensed.

At the meeting, one person got up and said, "Well, we wouldn't need landfills if we had really good diversion programs." He had a really good point. It's hopeful. Is this bill perfect? Absolutely not, but it's hopeful. At least we can have a discussion here on how to actually move this issue forward, because it's just an issue for some people, but when you are the municipality stuck with the lack of foresight to actually make diversion work, it's much more than just a talking point. We're going to need landfills, but we have to also look at how to make sure that we can really make them safe, not just make them targets.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Kitchener-Conestoga: two minutes.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I won't take it all, because I have to run back to committee, but I want to address a couple of things.

First, to the NDP: We will not go along to get along. We need the right plan. I've outlined that in an hour's remarks here on Bill 91. I encourage you to read Hansard. The plan is there.

To the Liberals: My speech was full of substantive criticism of Bill 91. It's there. I spoke for an hour. It's in Hansard. I encourage you to read it. We announced the plan last November. Read Hansard; it's there.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?



**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I appreciate the opportunity to stand and speak to Bill 91, the Waste Reduction Act, as the NDP environment critic and as the member for Davenport, which is a riding with a strong interest in environmental protection and innovation. So, I welcome this opportunity to speak today.

Over the last few months, I have heard from many representatives from industry and waste management. I've talked with environmental groups and municipalities about Bill 91, and I've heard clearly, from all corners, that the current system is broken and that we're not doing our part as a province to divert waste. I've heard from all corners that this legislation is far from perfect, but I've also heard a firm commitment from all corners that they agree to the principles behind this legislation, which is a commitment to reducing the amount of waste in our environment, and working with others to achieve that goal.

There are legitimate concerns being raised by all parties—and all stakeholders, I should say—and it's our responsibility as legislators, as industry producers and as the people of this province to work together to address these concerns as we move forward, but we can't afford to stall and we can't afford to go backwards. The time to address waste in our province is now.

We will be supporting Bill 91, the Waste Reduction Act. As this legislation goes forward, we must work to balance and address the concerns that have been raised. We must work to ensure that Bill 91 works for producers, for service providers and for municipalities. Most importantly, we must work to ensure that Bill 91, the Waste Reduction Act, works for the people of Ontario, because while the Waste Reduction Act might not be the top environmental concern on the minds of most constituents right now, this issue does have significant implications on our environment, on our economy and on our future, and it will affect the daily lives of people across Ontario. It is a very important piece of legislation.

If you asked people across the province whether they wanted to improve how we deal with our garbage, our waste, they would say that this is important. People in Ontario and people in my riding of Davenport do care about their environment, and they want to do their part to make it more sustainable.

1750

Last week, I met Peter Hume. He's the president of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, and he talked about how people get upset if they can no longer put something into their blue bin that they think should be recycled. They'll call the city to complain. They'll raise the issue with city councillors. I believe that people do this because they want to protect our environment now and they want to protect it for future generations. So while people in Ontario do not necessarily spend hours of their day at this point thinking about what the provincial government is going to do to promote waste reduction, we have a job to do to create laws and create policy that will make it easier for people to do just that.

I think if you pulled back the curtain on what has actually happened in this province and showed people

who work diligently in their homes and teach their kids about how to divert waste and how to use less, I think people would be shocked about how poor our record really is when it comes to waste diversion. Speaker, governments in Ontario have been letting us down. We are simply not doing our part.

Today, Ontario's waste diversion rates are among the worst in the country, and the amount of waste we produce continues to rise. Ontario's diversion rates are now languishing below 25%. We've lost track of the 3R hierarchy. Sometimes we focus more on recycling than on reducing and on burning waste rather than reducing it. Our progress on reducing packaging has been minimal. It's unfortunate that we've moved away from refillable containers, and we are one of the few provinces without a deposit return program for beverage containers.

Too much material is still going into landfills, and this is wasting economic opportunities in the recycling sector and opportunities to create jobs in our province. We know that recycling creates seven to 10 jobs for every job that's created in waste disposal, yet over three quarters of our waste is not recycled and goes to disposal instead. Waste reduction and resource conservation are a huge economic sector; it contributes over \$3.2 billion in revenue and 14,000 direct jobs to Ontario. But, Speaker, we could be doing far more.

I want to quote the Environmental Commissioner's report on waste reduction in Ontario. I actually want to take a moment to thank the commissioner, Gord Miller, and his staff for the good work they do at the Environmental Commission. We're lucky to have an Environmental Commissioner in Ontario to provide objective, non-partisan analysis of our environmental challenges and to continue to put forward environmental issues even when a lot of people don't want to talk about these things.

The Environmental Commissioner's office was established in 1993 by the Ontario NDP government. Since arriving here in 2011, I have definitely appreciated the work of Mr. Miller and the commissioner's office. Their office, to me, is part of the inspiration behind the new Financial Accountability Office that the NDP has fought to establish here in 2013 that will bring financial accountability back to Ontario. I think it follows the same kind of premises as the Environmental Commissioner's work.

Anyway, Speaker, here are some of the words of Environmental Commissioner Gord Miller when it comes to our current waste situation. He says: "[C]urrent programs under the [Waste Diversion] Act do not encourage producers to focus on waste reduction first, reuse second, and recycling third. Instead, they generally focus on finding the least costly means of collecting and recycling materials.... there is no direct financial incentive provided to individual producers to reduce their costs through product design, such as designing a product that is easier and cheaper to recycle. The lack of ... financial incentives to improve product design can be an impediment to reducing waste, increasing reuse, and ultimately striving for zero waste."

Speaker, under the existing Waste Diversion Act, the government has lacked the authority and the oversight to set binding targets and to fine companies who don't meet diversion targets. The lack of adequate oversight has led to the export or landfilling of materials which pollute our environment here in Ontario and the environment overseas as well.

Industry-funded organizations have had a powerful role in Ontario's waste diversion system, and they have tended to serve industry interests, keeping costs to producers down rather than protecting the public interest of minimizing waste and ensuring that producers cover 100% of the end-of-life management costs of their products.

Speaker, it is these industry-funded organizations that have imposed flat fees on individual producers, that have provided little economic incentive for the producers to reduce their waste or to improve their products. And then they've allowed the producers to pass these costs on to consumers—what the people of Ontario have learned to call eco taxes.

Consumers have been hit with these unfair eco fees, set by stewardship groups that are unaccountable to the public, which are expensive to consumers and are not helping to stimulate environmental innovation or reduce waste. Ultimately, this system has undermined public confidence in our government recycling programs.

The funding for blue box programs has fallen onto cash-strapped municipalities, meaning that programs are often too limited and not convenient enough for families to use.

Speaker, I live in Toronto. I'm well served by the blue box program, but I'm sure that if I spoke to colleagues in this House, not all of their communities are as well served. I don't think it's true that people in Toronto are any more committed to dealing with their waste in a responsible way than people from other communities. But right now, in this province, it's only places like Toronto that are able to manage to divert waste. It's municipalities, in the end, and the people in these municipalities, in this system, who are paying the bills to deal with industry waste.

Still, the blue box program is working far better than the ICI sector, the institutional, commercial and industrial sector, where far too little has been done to reduce waste. It's clear that the system is broken.

At last, after 10 years in government, after 10 more years of landfill and 10 years of waste and wasted opportunities, this government is now introducing legislation to address this issue. I think it's important that we take action. We cannot wait another 10 years to fix it.

Ontarians deserve a healthy environment. They deserve good, green jobs, and they deserve timely action from their government. The good news is that there has been an emerging consensus among stakeholders on how to move forward. There's broad consensus on the goals that we need to achieve and what we need to address this situation.

People agree that companies that produce toxic products or excessive packaging should pay the costs of safely managing or disposing of their products.

People agree that companies should have to internalize costs, not pass them directly on to consumers, so that the companies, the producers of waste, have an incentive to reduce waste and packaging.

People agree that there needs to be effective and independent oversight for provincial waste reduction programs.

People agree that government should set binding targets for waste diversion, with real penalties for companies that do not meet those targets.

People agree that provincial governments should also lead by example, by introducing standards for government agencies to reduce waste.

People agree that there needs to be better consumer education and more convenient drop-off locations to make consumer participation easier. We need to make sure that the system works for busy families; that people shouldn't have to carry their bottles home to recycle because there aren't facilities in public places or in restaurants.

People agree that we need to make more progress in reducing waste from the industrial and commercial sectors.

People agree that we need to get back to the 3Rs: reducing waste first, reusing containers and materials wherever possible, and then recycling the rest.

People agree that in order to achieve these goals, we need to build a culture of reducing, reusing and recycling and a real vision of a zero-waste society by funding education and community-based programs that foster public understanding of the economic and environmental benefits of reducing and recycling waste.

The question, then, Speaker, is whether Bill 91 can actually achieve these goals.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It being 6 o'clock, the member will start again when the bill is recalled at the point we left off.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It is now 6 o'clock. This House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned at 1800.*



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Holyday, Douglas C. (PC)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonnell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	York–Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	Niagara Falls	

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Michael Harris, Rob Leone  
Amrit Mangat, Taras Natyshak  
Rick Nicholls, Michael Prue  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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Catherine Fife, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Mitzie Hunter, Monte McNaughton  
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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Donna H. Cansfield  
Sarah Campbell, Donna H. Cansfield  
Grant Crack, Dipika Damerla  
John Fraser, Peggy Sattler  
Laurie Scott, Todd Smith  
Jeff Yurek  
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**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
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Lorenzo Berardinetti, Percy Hatfield  
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Randy Pettapiece, Monique Taylor  
Lisa M. Thompson  
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Bob Delaney, Frank Klees  
Jack MacLaren, Phil McNeely  
Rob E. Milligan, Shafiq Qadri  
Jonah Schein  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Bas Balkissoon, Steve Clark  
Grant Crack, Vic Dhillon  
Garfield Dunlop, Cindy Forster  
Lisa MacLeod, Amrit Mangat  
Michael Mantha  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Toby Barrett  
Toby Barrett, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
France Gélinas, Helena Jaczek  
Bill Mauro, Phil McNeely  
Norm Miller, Jerry J. Ouellette  
Jagmeet Singh  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof  
Donna H. Cansfield, Dipika Damerla  
John Fraser, Randy Hillier  
Rod Jackson, Monte Kwinter  
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh  
Bas Balkissoon, Ted Chudleigh  
Mike Colle, Vic Dhillon  
Cheri DiNovo, Ernie Hardeman  
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Paul Miller  
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